



## A WOMAN'S TREK









Mary Hall

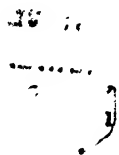
# A WOMAN'S TREK

FROM THE CAPE TO CAIRO

BY

MARY ° HALL

WITH SIXTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS AND TWO MAPS



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## PREFACE

AS I am the first woman of any nationality to have accomplished the entire journey from the Cape to Cairo, I think perhaps a simple account of how I managed to do it quite alone may be of some interest to many who, for various reasons, real or imaginary, are unable to go so far afield. I hope that a book, written from a woman's point of view, minus big game romances, and the usual exaggerations incidental to all things African, may be acceptable.

So I send my first-born into the world, trusting that an indulgent public will condone its faults and treat it with the kindly consideration it will need.

My thanks are due, for loan of photographs, to Hauptmann Otto Schleifer, Mr. Turner, of the London Mission, Mr. Ledbury, of the Universities' Mission, the Church Missionary Society, and The African Lakes Corporation.

M. H.

*London, 1907*



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# A WOMAN'S TREK

## SOUTH AFRICA

### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTORY

Pleasures of Travel—Natal—The Matopos—Victoria Falls—  
Bulawayo—Gwelo—Salukwe—Cape cart journey—Ruins of Zim-  
babwe—Salisbury—By train to Beira—East Coast

MR. NORMAN LOCKYER relates that while travelling on a scientific mission in the Rocky Mountains, he was astonished to meet an aged French Abbé, and could not help showing his surprise. The Abbé observed this, and in the course of conversation explained his presence in that distant region.

"You were," he said, "I easily saw, surprised to find me here. The fact is, that some months ago I was very ill. My physicians gave me up, and one morning I seemed to faint, and thought that I was already in the arms of the *bon Dieu* and I fancied the angels came and asked me, 'Well,

Monsieur l'Abbé, and how did you like the beautiful world you have just left?' And then it occurred to me that I, who had been all my life preaching about Heaven, had seen almost nothing of the world in which I was living. I determined, therefore, if it pleased Providence to spare me, to see something of this world—and so here I am."

I cannot say that there has ever been a chance of my being placed in precisely the same predicament as the aged Abbé, as I have always been interested in seeing fresh countries and peoples, and have ever considered travelling the most delightful method of studying geography.

Before I turned my attention to Africa I had visited all the other great continents of the world, and each country in turn had afforded me intense delight, either with its art, scenery, people, or climate, and frequently with all combined; and, "as if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on," I was not satisfied, but hungered for more.

In 1904, when South Africa was still uppermost in all minds, I decided to turn my steps in that direction. Since then I have traversed the whole length of the African continent, from the Cape to Cairo; but I propose to touch very slightly only on a few of the most noteworthy places north and south, describing more in detail my travels in that much less known part of Central Africa—the Africa of Livingstone and Stanley—which lies between the Zambesi and the Nile.

If ever a Guide to South Africa should be pub-

lished it will describe Cape Town, with its beautiful environs; the Hot Springs of Caledon, reached by a delightful railway route through Sir Lowry's Pass; Oudtshoorn, the centre of the ostrich-farming district, a few miles distant from which are the wonderful Fish Caves, almost as marvellous and quite as beautiful with stalactites and stalagmites as are the Mammoth Caves in Kentucky, U.S.A.; the enchanting drive of 60 miles from Mossel Bay to the Knysna Heads, and still further, to the immense virgin forest where wild elephants are still to be seen; and many other places which I visited.

I was charmed with Natal, which has been aptly styled "The Garden State." It was interesting, albeit sad, to visit the now historic scenes of the war, the course of which is marked, not by mile-stones, but by innumerable small white wooden crosses, erected to the memory of those who fell.

From Durban I travelled to Colenso, Ladysmith, Spion Kop, Harrismith, Elands Laagte, Dundee, Charlestown, Majuba Hill; and from thence I journeyed on to Pretoria, in due course reaching Kimberley, Mafeking, and Bulawayo.

I do not offer any description of these places, as they are almost as well known to most people as any part of Europe; but I consider Bulawayo sufficiently off the beaten track to justify a few remarks. It has the makings of a fine city, and is very ambitiously laid out in streets and avenues at right angles, after the American style. At the

time I visited the town things seemed to be rather at a standstill, owing to the effects of the war and disease among the cattle, and one felt that, had only Mr. Cecil Rhodes been spared for another few years, his master-mind would have evolved some way out of the difficulty.

The Matopos, a beautiful range of granite hills, lie a few miles from Bulawayo, and are reached by a loop-line. The last resting-place of Rhodesia's founder is situated on an eminence in the centre of a natural amphitheatre, whence one gets what he himself termed "The View of the World." His body is now embedded in the solid granite, and over it is placed a flat surface of brass, on which is engraved, simply—

#### HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF CECIL JOHN RHODES

The coffin was brought this distance with great difficulty. It arrived at Bulawayo from Cape Town by train, but as the loop-line was not then in existence it had to be drawn thence to the Matopos by large teams of oxen, the journey taking two days to complete.

A more solitary, peaceful, and sublime position could not have been chosen. During his life it was Rhodes's wont to sit on this very spot for perhaps whole days together, without speaking a word, working out the great ideas which were for ever seething in his brain. It was his wish that this place among the mountains should be

made a Valhalla for all the great men of South Africa. No one who has died since has been considered worthy of a place there; but the bodies of Major Alan Wilson and his gallant companions who lost their lives in attempting to capture Lo Bengula in 1890, have been disinterred and brought thither from Zimbabwe. They now lie under a magnificent monument, the top of which is just visible from Rhodes's tomb. It is very imposing, being of rectangular form, and composed of huge granite blocks, quarried on the spot. A beautiful bas-relief in brass is let in on the upper portion of each side, showing the company route marching; and the likenesses are so good, that they are quite distinguishable by those who knew the men. I was fortunate enough to visit the Matopos with a gentleman who had known Rhodes intimately, and was living in one of the latter's model farms close by. It was on this farm that a simple rustic shed was erected, in which Rhodes's body was laid for a night's halt on the way to its last resting-place.

A matter of about twenty-eight hours by train—it can now be done in less—transplanted me from "The View of the World" to what Mr. E. F. Knight has defined as "the most beautiful gem of the earth's scenery." Words fail me to describe the Victoria Falls, for, glorious as are the famous Falls of America, they yet pale before the awe-inspiring grandeur of their more recently discovered rival.

To compare statistics, the Falls of the Zambesi are about twice as broad, and two and a half times as high as the Niagara Falls. Their formation and situation are quite unique, as the immense volume of water falls with the noise of thunder into a deep and narrow ravine, which zigzags away for just upon 40 miles. The awe-struck spectator can follow the course of the raging waters, but must perforce remain on the top of the precipitous basaltic cliffs, which wall in the gorge, defying the curiosity of the explorer who would fain descend to the depths below.

When I visited the falls, the bridge—the highest in the world—was just about to be thrown across the chasm, and has since become an accomplished fact. There was no hotel, but I was delightfully entertained by the engineer, who was, so to speak, in command at the time.

The morning after my arrival, he, knowing what was before me, kindly provided me with a mackintosh and an oilskin hat, and then took me down to the Devil's Cataract. There he left me to enjoy one of the most glorious days of my life, and I shall not easily forget my first sight of the falls.

The Rain Forest runs parallel with the cañon, facing the falls, for nearly two-thirds of their length, and comes to an end where the cañon turns at right angles, and forms the Boiling Pot in the awful chasm below. The bush is very dense, saturated by the everlasting rain, caused by the drifting spray of the eternal falls.

Into this forest I strayed, and had it all to myself as far as human beings were concerned, wandering on, sometimes knee-deep in slush, and always being drenched by the dripping foliage. But what of that, when I was storing away a gallery of mental pictures such as could never be effaced!

I could see the dazzling sun beyond the mist, throwing rainbows here and there like dancing sprites, while the leaves of the trees were all decked in their finest diamonds. Now and again I caught sight of the sweetest little monkeys on the branches of the trees. They could also see me, and looked very knowing, but rather sad too, I thought, as much as to say, "Dear me, the British tourist is even here, now! Where shall we get away from the monster?" And I felt rather inclined to apologise; it did seem like an intrusion into their Paradise.

My way lay mostly through the jungle, but I took every opportunity of going out to the edge of the gorge to get a glimpse of the long line of falls disappearing in the distance through the haze. The frothing water immediately in front looked like myriads of white ostrich feathers, being tossed in the wildest confusion over the precipice.

After gazing spell-bound for a time, I turned, when lo! behold, the path I had just quitted was now transformed into a rainbow, and I had great difficulty in assuring myself that I was not in



dreamland, or under the spell of some fairy godmother!

After a few hours I retraced my steps, and emerging from the forest, came upon the spot whence I had started in the morning; but now the sun was in such a position that there was a magnificent rainbow athwart the chasm, the whole prospect being exquisitely beautiful. Even Turner, in his most imaginative mood, could never have pictured a more gorgeous scene; it so fascinated me that I felt I must plunge headlong into the midst of it, but contented myself by sitting on the ground, wet to the skin, just breathing in, as it were, every particle I could, until I felt I was getting stiffer and stiffer, and the fear of perhaps a severe attack of rheumatism compelled me to leave, at least, until I could get some dry clothes.

I spent several days on the west side of the river, and then, hospitality having been promised to some gentlemen who were expected, I gave place, and moved on a few miles up the river to Livingstone, a small settlement lying on the opposite bank, which gave me an opportunity of seeing the falls from the other side. At the present time one can visit the falls with less trouble and more comfort. A good hotel has been erected, and as the bridge is complete, one can get a view of both sides without making a detour of 5 miles each way.

The train for Bulawayo was timed to leave so early in the morning that passengers were obliged

to sleep in the carriages overnight. It was a little awkward for me, being the only woman, but one of the railway officials kindly put his tent at my disposal, and promised faithfully that he would not let the train leave without me in the morning.

Before I retired for the night I went again to the "Devil's Cataract," my favourite point of view, and had another long draught of its glories by full moonlight. I wished I could take root there; but no, the ordinary world had to be faced once more, and so I was forced to take a last, long, lingering farewell of one of nature's stupendous masterpieces.

The next morning I was wakened as promised about 4.30 a.m. The engine was being shunted, first here and then there, and it was some time before it was quite ready to start. I found the three gentlemen who had been visiting the falls, besides several others from up-country, on the train, and we whiled away the time with meals and bridge until about three o'clock in the afternoon, when we arrived at Wankies, the famous coal-mines. We knew we had to change carriages there, as up to that point we had been travelling on a construction line only.

On nearing the station a voice was heard calling from the train to some one on the platform, "When is the next train for Bulawayo?" The answer came, "Next Tuesday, sir." As it was then Saturday, our feelings will be more easily imagined than described! At first we flew to drink—but there is no need for alarm, it was only

tea: "the cup which cheers but not inebriates." We tried to get some milk to put into it, but that was impossible. "Well," we said, "bring us some lemons;" but even they were not to be had. Finally we drank it with orange juice, and found it quite a pleasant concoction, especially under the circumstances.

The men spent a busy time sending agitated telegrams to the traffic manager at Bulawayo, but meanwhile we were told that whatever happened we could not possibly proceed that night, as there was no engine available until the early hours of the morning.

With the usual hospitality of these parts, the two or three men managing the coal-mine came to the rescue; one of them gave up his own room to me, as I was the only lady, and the male passengers were disposed of in various shanties of the management. We had a delightful dinner in the evening, though the cook must have been rather "put to it" to provide, in such a place, for about seven extra hungry people at a moment's notice!

The next morning the telegrams of the previous day were answered by the Company wiring us permission to leave at once in a "special." Thus our little visit came to an abrupt end, and we started on our way again, rested and refreshed. Contrary to expectation, we arrived at Bulawayo at midnight, which solved many difficulties which we had anticipated as to finding sleeping accommodation in the train.

Nowadays I could leave Bulawayo in a "train de luxe," go direct to the Falls Hotel, and find every comfort awaiting me there; but notwithstanding all the uncertainties and discomforts, I am glad I went when I did, for the pleasant memories left behind by the kindly hospitality which our needs called forth at Wankies are never known by those who only travel when everything is in running order.

I stayed a few days at Bulawayo in the Grand Hotel, considered by some to be the finest in South Africa, and certainly not undeservedly. After a rest in the midst of its luxuries, I started with renewed vigour for the great Zimbabwe Ruins, which rank amongst the oldest and most curious in the world. So much has already been written about them by those who have devoted years of study to them on the spot, that all I can do is to give some idea as to how I reached them, and the impression they made on an ordinary mortal without any particular knowledge or theory as to their origin.

I travelled as far as Gwelo on the main line between Bulawayo and Salisbury. Crossing the bridge over the Shangani River, I recalled with pride the heroic attempt of Major Alan Wilson and his fearless companions to capture Lo Bengula. Their bravery, we are told, amazed even the Matabele.

Gwelo is the township from which it was originally intended that the Cape to Cairo Railway should

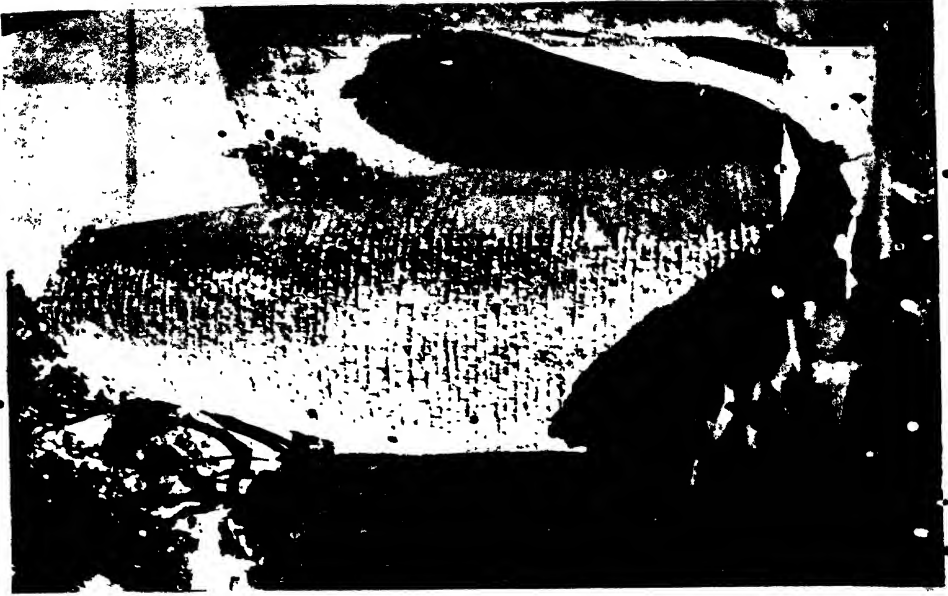
start north, traverse the Mafungabusi district, and cross the Zambesi near the Kariba Gorge. This plan was abandoned owing to the nature of the country north of the river being exceptionally difficult for railway construction. The directors of the Rhodesia Railways therefore fixed upon the present route, which lies further westward, and consequently is not so direct, but it gains in another way by passing the Victoria Falls and Broken Hill Mine. It will very soon be continued onward between Lake Nyasa and Bangweolo, to the south of Lake Tanganyika.

Livingstone, who died at Bangweolo, where his heart is buried, could never have imagined that in so short a time the shrill whistle of a railway engine would be heard in the heart of the Dark Continent, into which he had only been able to penetrate after years of travel, and encountering untold dangers and difficulties.

The next day I went 25 miles by a branch line to Salukwe. The inn there was more suited to the mining men who frequented it than to a lady. It seemed very crowded, and decidedly noisy; so, hearing the post was leaving that day, I decided to go direct to Victoria, the nearest settlement to the ruins.

In the afternoon I made a start, and was joined by two passengers, who, unfortunately for me, were getting off after a few hours to begin a shooting expedition.

The Cape cart was drawn by four mules, who



THE CONE. ZIMBABWE



VICTORIA FALLS



The few residents were most friendly and hospitable, and I spent a delightful week among them, notwithstanding the knowledge of what I had to go through again to get back to the railway.

My next place of call was Salisbury, the capital of Rhodesia and the seat of Government. It has a population of nearly 2,000 whites, and can boast a few good buildings, notably the Victoria Memorial, the Volunteer Drill Hall, Public Library, &c.

I left the country by the picturesque route to Beira, making a short stay at the little settlement of Umtali, which is surrounded by beautiful mountains; then through a charming bit of forest scenery to the coast.

My boat was a day late, so I had time to see the attractions of Beira at my leisure. It is built entirely on sand, so to obviate somewhat the difficulty of walking, two narrow lines of rails are laid along the streets, on which curious little trolleys are continually being pushed up and down by native "boys." All the Europeans living in the place possess private "bogey" carriages, and when calling or shopping necessitates any delay, their trolley is either lifted off the rails or thrown on to the side of the road.

The town belongs to the Portuguese, but there is a small English colony, including—in spite of the evil reputation of the climate—a number of ladies and children.

Before I arrived I was led to believe that getting



from the train to the boat could only be achieved at the imminent risk of my life ; but I am happy to say I suffered no ill-effects from an enforced stay of two nights.

With the characteristic courtesy which I had enjoyed during all my wanderings, the agent of the shipping company saw me through the difficulties of the Portuguese customs, and personally conducted me to the steamer belonging to the Deutsch Oest Afrika Cie., which was lying in the bay.

• The East Coast route home is full of interest. We had time *en passant* to get a good general idea of Zanzibar, with its Oriental crowd of people and interesting bazaars ; Daressalaam and Tanga, both German ports, well kept and laid out with great precision ; and the picturesque town and harbour of Mombasa, before entering the Red Sea and Suez Canal.

I had now spent a whole year in South Africa, and seen it very thoroughly. It was during the latter part of my wanderings that I came in contact with many people who had either visited or were familiar with the country beyond the Zambesi. My interest was further aroused by long conversations on the boat with the various Government officials, missionaries, and traders who were returning from British Central Africa, British East Africa, and Uganda. Hearing all they had to say, I resolved that if it were possible for a woman to travel in those parts alone, I would certainly make the attempt to at least reach the Great Lakes of

Central Africa, and if I got so far safely, to continue my peregrinations northward to Cairo.

On my return to England, I spent many weeks—or I might say months—in reading and corresponding with all whom I thought could and would help me to elucidate the difficulties which beset the unwary traveller in such an unknown country as Central Africa.

All the information I could obtain was doled out to me in homeopathic doses; but every little helps, and in the aggregate, I acquired sufficient knowledge to justify a start, and trusted that one step forward in the right direction would help me to the next.

Acquiring information was not the only thing to be done preparatory to such an undertaking. Having determined upon the venture, I had to provide myself with a suitable "kit" for the climate. My clothes and photographic materials were packed in the customary air- and water-tight tin boxes, which, when full, form a "man's load," weighing between 50 and 60 lbs.

The African Lakes Corporation, which is a big merchant and transport company in British Central Africa, undertook to provide me with a camp equipment, food, &c., and to convey me as far as Lake Tanganyika, that being the extent of the country they work. I felt that if I ever reached as far as that, I should have found my feet, as it were, and be competent to form my own caravan to go beyond.

G-45.43

I was not at all sure I should have nerve enough to carry me through; and nerve is not the only thing required; health is all-important, especially when travelling alone. The health which may be excellent in Europe is not always of the kind to withstand the ravages of a tropical climate, the insidious bite of the mosquito, or the "pestilence that walketh in darkness." However, the only thing to be done when contemplating such an enterprise is to take every precaution and abandon all fear.

I was told the best season for working my way up the Zambesi would be about June, the river at that time being high and the weather dry. So towards the middle of April, 1905, I found myself returning to Africa to take up the measuring tape, so to speak, which I had first thumbed at Cape Town, and left for a while at the Zambesi, and now hoped not to drop again until I had placed the other end of it at Cairo.

# BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

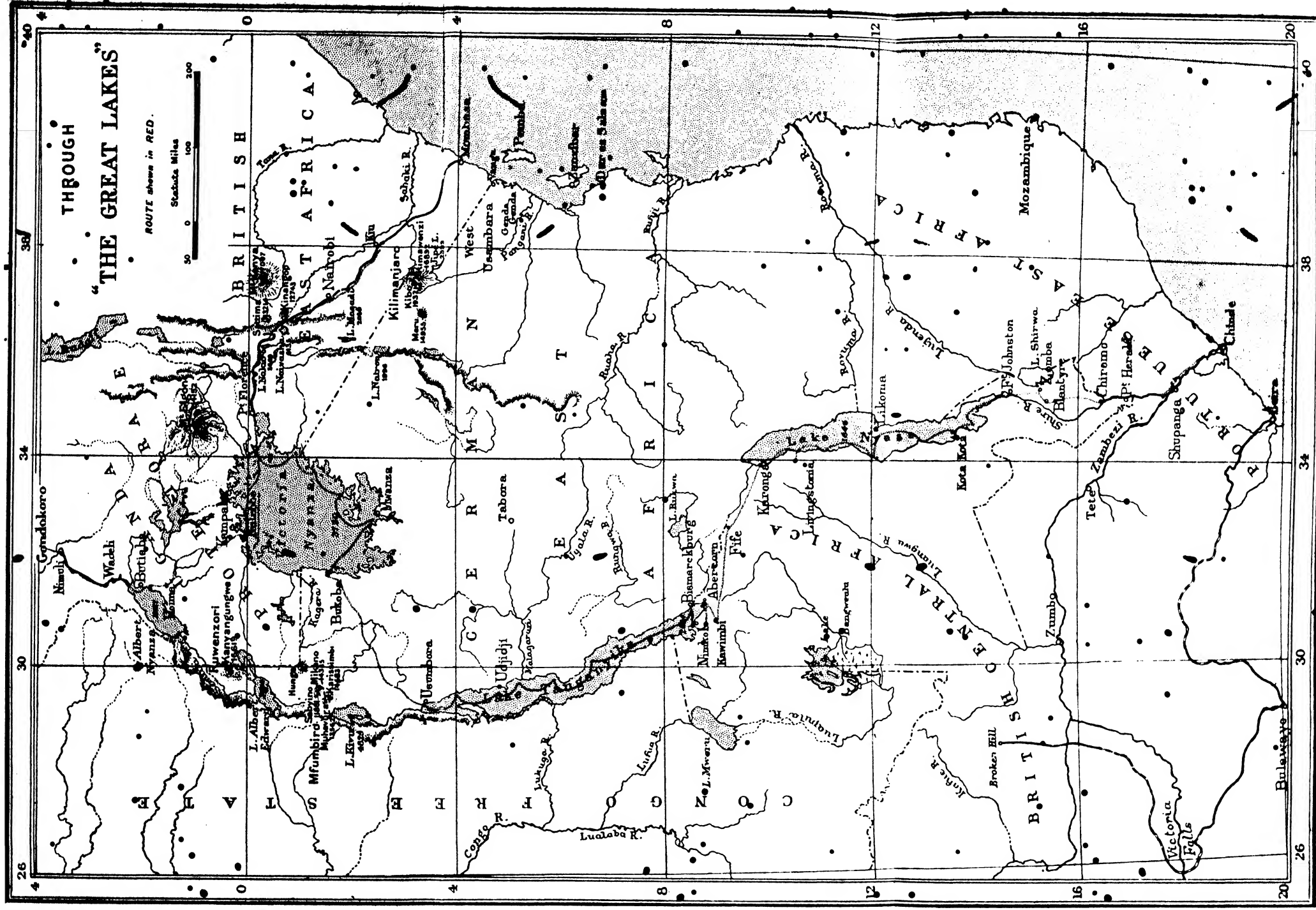
## CHAPTER II

### CHINDE

Disembark at the Zambesi—Arrival of Portuguese governor—Chinde *en fête*—River journey—Life on the boat—Grave of Mrs. Livingstone—Up the Shiré

HENRY DRUMMOND, F.R.S.E., F.G.S., in his "Tropical Africa," says: "Three distinct Africas are known to the modern world: North Africa, where men go for health; South Africa, where they go for money; and Central Africa, where they go for adventure.\* The first, the old Africa of Augustine and Carthage, every one knows from history; the geography of the second, the Africa of the Zulu and the diamond, has been taught us by two Universal Educators—War and the Stock Exchange; but our knowledge of the third, the Africa of Livingstone and Stanley, is still fitly symbolised by the vacant look upon our maps, which tells how long this mysterious land has kept its secrets."

It was this third Africa which I approached

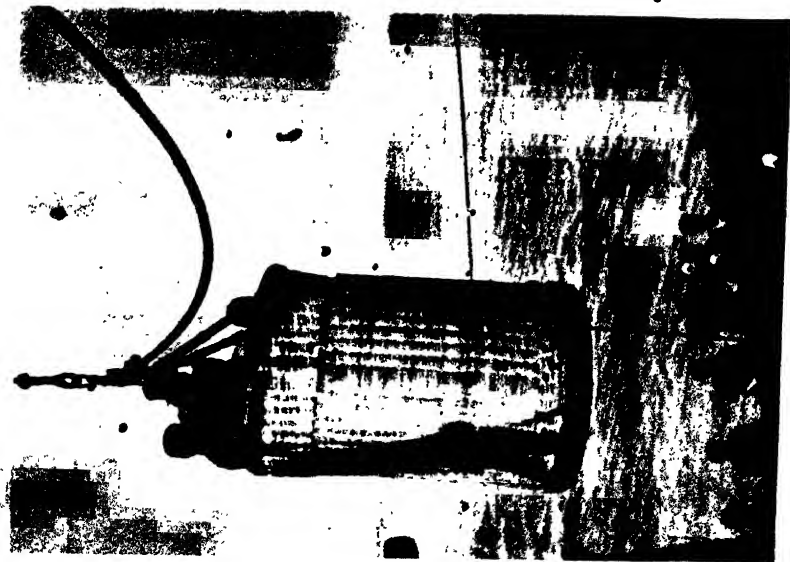


through the mouth of the Zambesi. This mighty river, one of the largest of Africa, rises considerably over 1,000 miles inland, and empties its enormous volume of water through four mouths into the Indian Ocean. On one of these mouths is situated Chinde, which has supplanted Quilimane as a port for British Central Africa.

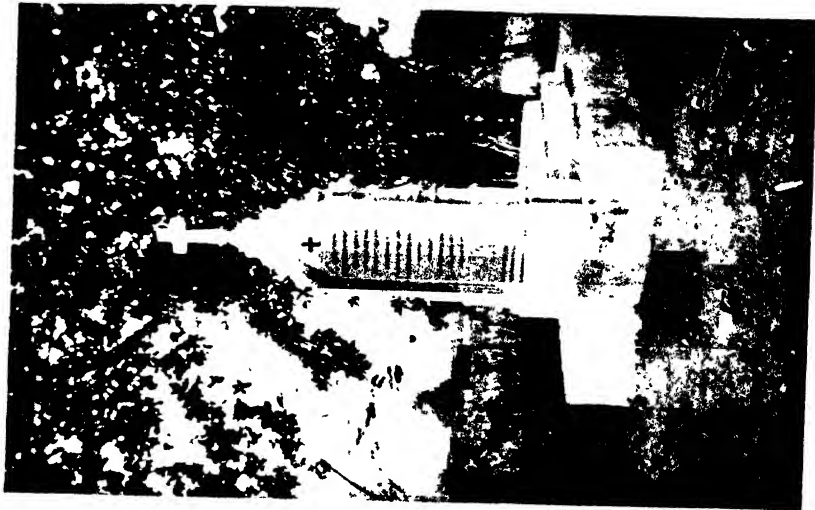
The mail boat in which I had travelled up the coast to Portuguese East Africa, arrived outside Chinde some time during the night. There it had to anchor until morning, when the tug could cross the bar and come to us. We had hoped to get ashore in it on the same tide, but this was found to be impossible owing to the large quantity of luggage and freight that had to be transferred.

The embarking and disembarking of passengers and baggage at these East Coast ports is very amusing to the onlookers. A huge wicker basket, big enough to accommodate five or six people, is attached by iron chains to a crane and swung backwards and forwards from the deck of the steamer, over the side to the tug. For my own part I think it is a far easier and safer means of transfer than by a long flight of anything but firm steps down the side of the boat. Naturally there would be a catastrophe if the chain gave way while the basket was in mid-air, but such risks are common, and have to be encountered every day, in one way or another.

It is said that if the officer in charge of the passengers has a grudge against any particular person, he can arrange, by a simple movement of



DISSEMBARKING AT CHINBE



• • MRS. LIVINGSTONE'S GRAVE •





the arm, for the basket to be let down rather too abruptly to be pleasant.

All this took so long that, after embarking fresh passengers, the chance of getting ashore was lost, and the tug and the mail had to swing about on the open sea until later in the day, much to the annoyance of all except those who wanted to land.

Personally I was very glad of the delay, as it gave me the opportunity of a little conversation with Sir Alfred and Lady Sharpe, who were joining the steamer on their way home.

Sir Alfred Sharpe, the Commissioner of British Central Africa, was very sanguine as to my chances of getting through the Lake country, and as his opinion was well worth having, I felt greatly encouraged.

From Delagoa Bay we had brought His Excellency the Governor-General of Mozambique, his wife and suite, who were going up the Zambesi as far as Tête, so that in the afternoon, when we all left in the tug, we had quite a royal "send off."

The Bar, which more often than not is very objectionable, was evidently on its best behaviour, and we passed over it without being conscious that it was there.

We then proceeded up the river about a mile, amid great gaiety in the way of salutes, flags, and decorations of all kinds, including fireworks, which the natives, on any special occasion, love to let off, even in daylight, although of course nothing more than an explosive crack and a little smoke is the result.

The agent of the African Lakes Corporation met us at the quay, and relieved us of all worry concerning our luggage.

After passing the customs I got into a machila and was carried to the hotel, which is at no great distance; but walking is almost impossible, as Chinde, like Beira, is built on soft sand, into which one sinks ankle-deep at each step. The machilas are unlike those I have seen in other parts of Africa and Madeira. The traveller sits with feet up on a flat canvas, firmly stretched, and attached to the centre of a long pole. Two boys at either end of the pole act as bearers, and each couple place their shoulders together, and entwine their arms round one another in such a manner that it is difficult to say where one boy begins and the other ends.

I was agreeably surprised with the hotel. It is a two-storied building, quite comfortable and well-kept, and the table as good as could be expected.

The following afternoon a machila was sent to take me to the sports, held on the Sports Ground in the Concession, which consists of a few acres of land granted to the English by the Portuguese; any goods going up-country are placed there in bond, and no duty levied on them. At one time all the English were supposed to live within this prescribed area, but now it is entirely filled by the British Consulate and the warehouses and offices of different merchants.

The Governor and suite passed me on the way,

looking very picturesque in their machilas, which were of white canvas, with bright brass chains glittering in the sun, and the "boys" dressed in smart red uniforms. I found all the ladies of the place, about fourteen, already assembled on the Grand Stand. The men had drawn up an interesting programme of various sports, concluding with a football match, which the blacks, who were crowding round, enjoyed immensely. They gave vent to their feelings of delight in roars of laughter, especially when a man fell or "headed" the ball.

During the afternoon tea was served on the Grand Stand in great style. After the entertainment was over, every one hurried home to dress for the dinner which was being given that evening in honour of the Governor. The entire white population was present, and had a very enjoyable time.

His Excellency and party were to have left the following morning, but the attractions of Chinde proved so great that he postponed his departure for another day.

The next morning I found time to look about the place a little and see the principal streets. All the buildings are of corrugated iron throughout; the roofs are invariably painted a brick-red, and the walls generally remain untouched, but occasionally they are tinted pale green, which is very effective. There are several good stores, and one or two smaller foreign hotels besides that of the

A.L.C. The seashore lies some little distance away, and is not easily reached, as there are no fascinating little trolley cars to run one over the tedious sand, but the settlement is near enough to get the sea-breeze. Invalids from up-country come down here to recruit, but to me, fresh from England, it seemed the very last place for a health resort.

There were to be great festivities and fireworks that night, so we formed a small party from the hotel, and went out to see them. The river was a gorgeous sight; a great many boats were on the water, beautifully illuminated, and I could not imagine how it had all been achieved in such an out-of-the-way part of the world. But truly necessity is the mother of invention, and the wonderful results had been produced by candles stuck in every procurable wine- or beer-bottle, ingeniously covered with coloured paper to form globes. The fireworks were also excellent. It is not often that Chinde is *en fête* in this manner, and I was told that if I saw it in its normal condition I should hardly recognise it.

The next day we hastened off to join our steamer, which was one of those forming an escort to the Governor. He, not being quite so punctual as the Royal Family, kept us waiting some time. When he was ready, all the boats, about twelve in number, fell into line, and made a pretty sight winding, one behind the other round the bends of the river, twisting and turning like a colossal snake. We followed for about two hours, when the Governor's

boat slackened speed to allow us to pass. Then we, and the other following boats, ranged ourselves into two lines, between which His Excellency and party slowly steamed, amid the usual farewell salutes, shouting, and waving of handkerchiefs. •

After this we went back to Chinde, and two barges were quickly attached to our boat; in a short time we were again wending our way upstream, this time on our own account.

*The Princess* is very much like other stern-wheel river-boats, and with its two barges, constitutes a little world in itself. There is the body of the boat, the deck of which may be called the ground floor; the centre of this is occupied with two rows of cabins opening on to a small passage-way. In the front is a furnace to heat the boiler; at the back the open-air kitchen, larder, and place for hanging butcher's meat. •

On the next floor, above the cabins, is the saloon, furnished with two long tables to accommodate about fourteen people, and a sideboard, on which is set a clock and a tantalus. We never had a chance of using the latter, as the boat is run on teetotal principles; not even mineral waters were available, although through the courtesy of the captain, lime juice was served out one particularly hot day. •

In front of the saloon there is a covered portion of deck used as a lounge. This would have been very comfortable if the boiler had not been fixed just in front of it, which proved rather a drawback

in the hottest part of the day, as the air passing it became so heated.

Above this again is the roof, on which is the bridge, whence the coloured pilot directed our course. The barges on each side contained cargo below, and above in the centre, wood fuel was piled for use on the steamer. The natives, whose quarters were at either end, were rather interesting to watch ; some were working, making garments of sorts ; others cooking, others again reading, and they all talked incessantly. When we tied up for the night they would rush ashore, light their fires, prepare their food, and again chatter, chatter, chatter, until the early hours of the morning. It was a decided relief to us when they thus removed themselves to a distance !

The river scenery near Chinde is only redeemed from the commonplace by the extensive mangrove swamps, which give to it a certain weirdness, for these straggling trees stand in the brackish water with more than half their roots exposed. After a few hours however, we entered the Zambesi proper, and things assumed quite a different aspect ; the banks were generally covered with an immense growth of aquatic grasses and reeds, interlaced and massed together by an endless variety of creepers into a dense jungle. In places the river widens considerably, and now and again expands into a large island-studded lake.

Huge unwieldy hippos were for ever pushing their heads out of the water to see what was going on ; the

"crops" are not so curious, and were usually having a delightful siesta on the banks, until rudely awakened by an unkind bullet, which, if it did not kill, at least sent them wriggling into the water. The birds are also an interesting feature of the landscape, and their beautiful plumage introduces just the touch of colour it requires. There were cormorants, bitterns, storks, ibises, gorgeous blue and scarlet kingfishers, and brightest-coloured reed sparrows. I never tired of watching the charmingly artistic "little bits" they made, as they flitted from branch to branch. One picture in particular remains in my mind of hundreds of flamingoes standing on a little spit of land jutting out into the river, their beauty reflected in the still water, until a fearful disturber of the peace in the shape of our steamer approached them, when they spread their lovely red-lined wings and flew away.

One part of the river was known to be the favourite resort of guinea-fowl, so one of the passengers was on the alert with his gun, in the hope of securing a few, to form a slight change from the monotonous chicken on our bill of fare. The blacks are always very excited and eager, when anything is to be shot, and they were in the water and up the bank, almost before the birds dropped.

Along the river, at intervals, there are several large sugar estates, apparently in a very flourishing condition.

The mornings on the river were often foggy,

which delayed our start onwards; the afternoons became a trifle too hot, but the evenings were perfect, and we lounged on our deck-chairs, beneath the Southern Cross, and found that life was certainly worth living!

The following day was Whit Monday, and as I sat absorbing the calm and peace of my surroundings, I thought, What a contrast to the rush and bustle of the Metropolis on such a day!

That afternoon we touched at Shupanga, a station now occupied by a French Jesuit Mission. It is interesting as the place where Mrs. Livingstone died, and is buried. Her grave lies in a quiet spot under the trees, a few yards from the building, and is marked by a simple headstone, which is comparatively new. This, I learnt later, was owing to it having been mislaid in England on its way out some years ago.

The present building is simply an addition to David Livingstone's old home. Boot-making is the industry of the Mission. Their speciality is a high mosquito boot, made of soft leather, and reaching above the knee. Such boots are almost indispensable to any one remaining in the country any length of time.

#### THE SHIRÉ

We tied up each evening at dusk near the bank, or anchored more or less in midstream, in order to avoid our ever-present enemy the mosquito, or at any rate, some of "him"! Soon after starting on



the third day, we bore to the right, and entered the Shiré, which runs a northern course. The channel of this tributary being narrower and deeper, it is far easier to navigate than the main river. Nevertheless, the captain did not think he would get very far up with *The Princess*, which meant that we would have to wait until a smaller boat came down from Chiromo to pick us up.

The scenery now improved considerably. Towards evening, turning at a bend of the river, we passed a village surrounded by high borassus palms, silhouetted against a glowing sunset sky. It brought to mind scenes on the Nile, and we appreciated it all the more on account of the tropical type of vegetation being so scarce.

There is much more life along this river, and it was a perpetual source of interest to watch the people as we went along. As we passed some of the villages, they would rush out holding live, emaciated chickens by the legs, and shaking them vigorously in the air to attract attention. If the captain wished to buy any the boat was run in to the side, and the bargaining began. At one place we got four or five at fourpence each, which he thought very dear, the usual price being twopence! On our roof we had a chicken-house, in which they were kept and fed until required for the table.

The people seemed to occupy themselves by fishing, for a quantity of fish was hanging on lines in the sun to dry. In the same neighbourhood

they also cultivate large supplies of mealies, rice, and beans.

Since the previous day, we had passed beautiful mountain scenery in the distance, and in consequence of the winding of the river, Morambala (4,000 feet, the highest peak of the range), had been in view most of the time. There is a large coffee plantation on the summit, and the climate up there is said to be delightful.

The captain proved right in his surmise. We only managed to get a few miles up the Shiré in *The Princess*, and then we were obliged to tie up close to Sobala, a location with native huts of a rather superior kind. They were well built, with sides made of reeds or bamboo, and very deep, overhanging grass-thatched roofs nearly reaching to the ground, forming delightful shade for the people during the heat of the day. The population spent most of the time we remained there, sitting on the banks of the river, watching our every movement. One group was keenly interested in seeing me write: they had a good view, as the whole side of the saloon is open. The captain resented their curiosity at lunch-time, and had the side awning put down, much to the annoyance of the dress—or rather undress—circle. The banks were too steep, or later in the day I might have visited the village, when no doubt I should have found their customs and doings quite as amusing as they had found ours.

The next morning we were quite prepared for another day's delay, but much to our surprise and

delight, directly after breakfast we saw the expected boat turn the corner. Then began a great hurrying and scurrying to pack our few things, and get them transferred to the *Henry Henderson*. She is one of the early Mission boats, and now commonly known as the *Pious Paddler*. She proved to be a smaller boat, with four cabins, which allowed us one each; they, like the boat, were smaller, but, if anything, rather cleaner than the ones we had left. There was no saloon, but we took our meals at a table placed at the back of the cabins. We could either sit there during the day or go on to the roof, which was covered with an awning.

Things were very primitive on this boat. When we arrived on board I asked for some water to wash my hands: it was brought to me in a teapot! Just before dinner I wanted some more, for the same purpose; and the boy, evidently having some regard for the fitness of things, brought it to me in a jelly mould.

My little cabin was very comfortable, but I was glad that I am not given to walking in my sleep, or I should most probably have taken my bath too early! For outside the cabin door there was only about two feet of deck, and that innocent of any protection whatever.

I also took much comfort from not having seen any cockroaches about. It would be rash to say there were none, but what the eye does not see the heart does not grieve.

My neighbour was very much annoyed by a

rat, and he felt that all endeavours to frighten it away were hopeless, when, after every available article in the cabin had been thrown at it, it still sat calmly in the doorway, trimming its whiskers by the light of the moon.

As we were about to start, the boat of a rival company came up, and endeavoured to go ahead. Knowing how low the water was, we were terribly afraid she would get stranded in front of us, and block our course; but fortunately, after one or two vain attempts, she gave it up as hopeless. We, with our smaller boat, just managed to get through, only touching the bottom slightly now and again. Our bad "stick" was reserved for another day, when it took us at least two hours to get off.

A little further on we passed on the left a small red-brick erection, looking like an out-of-work chimney, which indicated the Anglo-Portuguese boundary.

As we proceeded the country appeared to be more under cultivation, and plenty of bananas among the other vegetation helped to give the idea of at least a sub-tropical country.

— The natives were still very anxious to sell their chickens, in order to pay their hut tax, which was due, but the captain, deeming his larder well supplied for the moment, shouted to them to wait until his return. The adult native seemed rather shy of the white man at close quarters, and fled in consternation when we landed one day. But when we were at a safe distance, mid-stream,

the little ones delighted to run along the banks after us, shouting and laughing, much as children do in any other country.

The Morambala Peak, which had been our landmark for so long, was now lost to sight, and we felt a sense of loneliness without it. The navigation was every moment becoming more difficult. It was interesting to watch the course of our steamer as it was guided from one side of the river to the other, in order to take advantage of the deepest channel. The pilot had to be ever on the alert. The native has a very keen eye, and detects even quicker than the white man the signs written upon the face of the waters, and very seldom errs. We constantly heard the bell go for half-speed, quickly followed by a bump, and then general excitement, all the native passengers from the barges wading in the water, pretending to push and shove the boat with all their might, neither of which they really did unless the watchful eye of the captain was upon them. We happened to have a particularly lazy set at that time; so as they would not help, and the barges impeded our progress so much, it was decided to leave them behind to do the best they could.

After that we bumped and bumped until we got to Port Herald, the first British station in B.C.A. where we terminated our river trip. For three months in the year there is water enough to allow of traffic continuing up the river as far as Katungas, whence it is only an easy day's journey to Blantyre, but we were just a little too late, so had to take the more tedious overland route by Cholo.

## CHAPTER III

### PORT HERALD

Train journey—Night at Chiromo—Bishop Mackenzie's grave—  
Machila—Rowdy start—Through Elephant Marsh—Rest-house—  
Chase for lunch

PORT HERALD is quite a busy place, being the base of the railway, which then reached Chiromo, and which it was hoped eventually to extend to Lake Nyasa. It is a pleasantly laid-out township, with beautiful shady trees on either side of its straight roads. It boasts of a police station, and several residences for Europeans; two or three stores, and a tennis court, besides numbers of huts and shops kept by the Banyans, or Indian traders, who do a considerable amount of business with the natives.

The township is surrounded by a beautiful range of mountains, looking perfect as we saw them by the light of the setting sun. There was only one white lady in the place, who was naturally made much of, and being of a lively disposition she was a great acquisition. It is not a healthy station,

and in times of sickness the attentions of a "ministering angel" are invaluable.

At different places up the river, various poor, pale invalids just recovering from fever came on board the boat for a little companionship. They had a most depressing effect upon me, and I felt if I saw many more I should turn tail and flee the country, but as I went on and got to the higher plateaux, the fever-stricken brethren became the exception rather than the rule.

Trains ran regularly three times a week to and from Chiromo. The Company scorned all such conventionalities as a station or booking office, and our tickets were handed to us as we sat at breakfast on the boat. The train was made up of one carriage for Europeans, and many open trucks for the natives, all of which were filled. We found it waiting for us in the middle of the street, and we entered the carriage from a slanting platform erected by the roadside.

It took two hours to Chiromo, rather longer than usual, as we had a railway official with us who wished to make a few practical observations *en route*.

At Chiromo we had to cross the river, and as the bridge had been washed away, we were taken over in a barge to a new motor boat, *The Countess*, and were told that it was to be our home for the night. I had a comfortable single cabin, the only drawback to it being the thinness of the wooden division between it and the next one. For instance, when

the occupant of the bunk on the other side thought proper to turn, the partition bulged to such an extent that I fancied we should soon be sharing a cabin! It can be imagined that such proximity was not altogether conducive to sleep.

#### CHIROMO

Chiromo is a pretty little place situated on an angle formed by the junction of the Shiré and its chief tributary, the Ruo. Most of the houses are built well back from the main road, which is a very fine avenue of acacia trees. At the end of this avenue stands a grand old Baobab, or cream of tartar tree, known to the residents as "the big tree," and it forms a boundary mark for their walks, as it is dangerous to go beyond, owing to the wild beasts. Only a short time after I left, the papers published the fact that eight lions had been right through the township, and had carried off a native.

Chiromo is the proud possessor of a drum and fife band, composed of about twelve small black boys dressed in khaki, who admire themselves immensely, especially when changing guard. They play on the tennis courts every evening, and as they were taught chiefly by a Scotch lady the airs of that country predominate.

In the evening, accompanied by the two lady members of the Universities' Mission who had been my fellow-passengers up the river, I visited the tomb of Bishop Mackenzie, which lies at a place near the mouth of the Ruo, where he died of fever.



An agent of the A.L.C. suggested getting a boat and taking us, which was lucky, for without his help we should have had great difficulty in finding the grave in the short time we had at our disposal. We passed the mouth of the Ruo and rowed down the Shiré for a mile, and were then carried ashore on the backs of natives. On landing, we found the undergrowth so dense that men had to be sent forward to beat down a path for us to approach the grave, which lies about half a mile from the shore. It is a simple mound of earth, surmounted by an iron cross, placed there by Dr. Livingstone. On it is engraved :—

HERE LIETH CHAS. FRED. MACKENZIE,  
MISSIONARY BISHOP,  
WHO DIED JANUARY 31ST, 1862.  
A FOLLOWER OF HIM WHO WAS ANOINTED TO PREACH  
DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES AND TO SET AT  
LIBERTY THEM THAT ARE BOUND.

But in spite of its simplicity, it is a distinguishing landmark, as well as a loadstar in the history of Missions.

After a silent reverence at the grave, it was time to retrace our steps, but we could not leave it in such an overgrown condition, so we set to work and pulled away as much of the tangle as possible.

All are not so fortunate as ourselves in having time to visit the spot where the great Bishop lies buried, but many, passing in the boats, are glad to see the place indicated by a roughly-cut wooden

cross, raised high enough above the trees to be visible from the river.

A site for the Mackenzie Memorial Church has been granted by the Commissioner in Chiromo, and the Bishop hopes to see the building commenced next year, according to plans and under the direction of the able missionary architect, whose design for the Likoma Cathedral has been so successfully carried out.

We returned up the river between the gorgeous sun setting on the left, and a glorious moon rising on the right.

The morning we left Chiromo we were up at daybreak, and ready to make an early start. The "we" means three passengers besides myself, the two ladies I have mentioned, and a gentleman who was on his way to Fort Jameson; and as each of us was provided with a machila, and sixteen men to carry it, in addition to porters for the loads, the tumult was tremendous. They were a fine set of men, and would compare favourably with the poor spindle-shanked coolie of India.

I led the way, after being comfortably settled in the machila. A machila—Portuguese word for hammock—is usually made of strong canvas slung on one or two poles of bamboo or pine; when there are two poles, they are held together by a transverse piece of wood, each pole having a man at either end. I think those with two poles the more comfortable, and certainly safer, for if one man slips, it is scarcely perceptible as the other three can



A MACHILA



LUNCH TIME



support it in a horizontal position. There is a fl canvas canopy with loose flaps at the sides which can be used as a protection from the sun or rain, or when not needed they can be thrown over the top. There is quite a knack in getting into it, and when that is acquired, and plenty of cushions are forthcoming, it is one of the most delightful conveyance imaginable.

The rowdy procession rushed down the long avenue, four men bearing each person, the other running by the side, carrying all kinds of extraordinary weapons. One ran in front to give the pace; he was possessed of a stick, with a tin can containing stones, on the top. This he shook with an energy worthy of a nobler cause. Many of the others were brandishing short-handled shovels with holes in them; these, I learnt later, were the utensils they used for cooking their corn. The men minus shovels carried a knobkerry, or some other equally warlike weapon. All were shouting and yelling at the top of their voices, like a set of maniacs, and kicking and prancing about in the most fantastic manner. In their more subdued moments they sang quite sweetly, improvising verses descriptive of the "Donna" they were carrying, with a general refrain, and their voices are certainly musical. They looked a wild, unclothed mob, but worked well, and were good-tempered and jolly all the time. They ran quite fast for hours without a single pause, even for changing men; nor did they stop when they shifted the pole from one shoulder

to the other, and the tremendous cracks they gave their skulls if they failed to raise it sufficiently seemed to have no effect on them whatever.

After I became accustomed to the swaying movement, there was a delightful feeling in being carried along through the cool morning air, by such an army of willing bearers, all unconsciously gratifying our sense of the grotesque. The only thing I took exception to was their habit of quite suddenly, without rhyme or reason, rending the air with piercing yells, and giving the pole of the machila a tremendous thwack with one of their weapons, which literally made my blood run cold.

Our way for some miles was through the Elephant Marsh, an expanse of malarious swamps extending for miles in every direction. It is the haunt of countless elephants and other wild animals, and is likely to continue so, as it is a close game reserve. Every year some dozen natives, mostly mail-men, are caught unawares by these animals and never heard of again. Needless to say, this region was swarming with mosquitos, and we were not sorry when we had pushed our way through, and left it in the rear.

At eleven o'clock we drew up and rested the men while we had lunch, and then we continued our journey for about three hours to the foot of Mour Cholo. This is the mountain which, figuratively speaking, had been "held over me," since I arrived at Chinde, as one of the great obstacles I should have to overcome. It certainly was a hard climb

particularly in such a climate. I had to attempt the ascent on foot, but shortly before arriving at the top, and not knowing our destination was almost reached, I had to give in, and made signs to my bearers that they must return with the machila, and endeavour to carry me. It was getting late, and I did not feel equal to grappling with a lion who might be on the prowl, perhaps in a hurry for his breakfast! There is generally more risk of attack in the evening, as these animals sleep all day and rouse up at sunset to look for food.

The others had arrived at the rest-house a good half-hour before me. Climbing has never been one of my strong points. They had very kindly prepared a pot of tea, and I was not long in disposing of it.

The rest-house, in charge of a black boy, was perfectly new, and consisted of a room in the centre for meals, with a bedroom on either side. The ladies had chosen one, and as the third passenger was not leaving so early in the morning as we were, I arranged to let him have the other, while I took the dining-room.

After finding a basin and some water with great difficulty, I had the room to myself for a "wash-up" before the general public came in, when we had a consultation to decide what tins from the cupboard we should open for dinner. The choice fell upon Julienne soup, herrings, sausages, and biscuits: not a very sumptuous *menu*, perhaps, but hunger is the best sauce. We also had to choose what we would

take with us for lunch the next day. The "hotel" belongs to the A.L.C., and as we were all their passengers, we simply took what we wanted, and wrote a list of them in a book kept for the purpose. Then we all signed it, much in the manner that is customary in any rest-house in Switzerland or other mountainous country.

The beds were mere stretchers on which we placed our own pillows and travelling rugs, and as the building was too new—the mud floor was scarcely dry—to have become the haunt of every creeping thing, we had a peaceful night and were up betimes in the morning. The porters were wrangling and making a terrible noise outside; something had evidently gone wrong, and I thought the gentleman remaining for a rest would not be getting much. We calmed them down at last, and made a start.

Naturally they were not quite so fresh as they had been the previous day, and as our way for some time was through a wood with many ups and downs, our progress was slower, but more peaceful.

In about three hours we came to a curious narrow bridge, formed of planks fastened together by wire rope. It was decidedly wobbly, and I think, had there not been a wire hand-rail, I should have found it almost impossible to cross. We then passed into quite open country, and came upon a better road. We found it very difficult to arrange beforehand for our noonday halt, for we had no idea when we should come across the necessary water, required



by the men to cook their food. Stupidly, we had packed the three luncheons in one basket, and the men who had taken it got such a long way in front that we could not overtake them. I, who had led the way the previous day, was now in the rear, and after a time my men began to convey to me the fact that they were very hungry, by standing in front of me and rubbing their stomachs with great vehemence. I quite believed it, and was sorry for them, as they had been running for five hours, and quite deserved a rest and some food. But what was I to do? I also felt hungry, and determined that for the future my porters should always carry my own food with them, under any circumstances—then one is perfectly independent.

I was so tired myself, that at last I got out of the machila and sat on the roadside. I produced from my pocket three small biscuits; I also had with me a bottle of cold tea, half of which I drank, and offered the remainder to the porters. It was a funny sight to see them divide it between about eighteen, some making very wry faces over it, which I concluded was because there was no sugar in it.

When I saw the men did not prepare their food, I thought we had better make another attempt to overtake the others, and in a few hundred yards, round a turn in the road, we came suddenly upon them. I had no English-speaking boy with me, so had not understood when I sat down, that the porters were trying to tell me they knew we were then not far from the halting-place.

In the afternoon we passed the encampment of some native soldiers in charge of white officers. They were on their way to the coast, *en route* for Uganda, and were all very jovial and full of life. Four of them seized upon my machila and bore it along for some distance, at a very swinging pace. They do so love to show off! I was very glad they did, for it gave my bearers a good rest, and buoyed them up for further exertions.

For some hours we travelled along a wide road or avenue. The A.L.C. had promised that a cart from Blantyre should meet us about this point, but it had not been sent, and as we had to continue on foot we soon left the main road for a short cut through long grass.

The men were all very tired by that time, and I did not wonder at it, for I consider the journey much too long to be done in the allotted time, both for bearers and borne. It is just upon 75 miles by the way we had come, from Chiromo to Blantyre, and Cholo to be scaled into the bargain. I think there ought to be a rest-house at the foot of the hill for the first night; then one could get to the top in the cool of the early morning, and have time to enjoy the beautiful scenery going up, arriving at another stopping-place a few miles beyond on the second day. That would necessitate two nights on the way instead of one, which would be far better for all concerned. The excuse is that there are too many lions at the foot of Cholo to allow of this, but "I hae me doots," as to that being the real reason.

As Blantyre came in sight we passed through a native village, the inhabitants of which turned out *en masse* to see us go by. The porters, tired as I knew they must have been, put on a spurt, assumed the same hilarity they had displayed at the start, and we approached the hotel in great form. The few people who live there were just returning from a walk (it was Sunday) and, much to my dismay, we arrived simultaneously at the door, so that I had to dismount more or less in public. As I have remarked, there is a knack in getting into a machila: there is also one in getting out, which I unfortunately had not then acquired, so all I could do was to roll out, in a most undignified manner, a disorganised mass, at the onlookers' feet. People sometimes attach a good deal of importance to first impressions: I can only hope that the few who witnessed my *début* at Blantyre have long ere this forgotten theirs of me!

## CHAPTER IV

### BLANTYRE

- Scotch settlement—Visit the Mission—Lay in stores—Engage English-speaking boy—Start for Zomba—Tennis club—Day on the mountain—Leave for Fort Johnson

THE hotel at Blantyre had only been recently finished. It is a fine building for that part of the world, and I thoroughly enjoyed a week in a real bedroom, unshared by any mosquitoes. A bathroom also added greatly to my comfort, and I felt I must make much of such luxuries while I had them.

The garden, like the house, is quite new, and when the flowers have had time to grow it will be very pretty. It is rather sandy, and as the water is some distance away, it has to be brought up in large tubs, but there is no difficulty about this, as native labour is so cheap. Roses flourish all the year round; most English flowers can be grown, and strawberries are by no means unknown.

The hotel belongs to the A.L.C., and with the stores, bank, and houses of the employés, forms the part of Blantyre known as Mandala. The natives

are very quick to notice anything in the way of individual distinctiveness. One of the two brothers who first established the station wore glasses, so they promptly called the place Mandala, that being the native word for glass. Now the term has become common to all the big stores anywhere in B.C.A.

Blantyre is composed of several minor settlements on various hills, covering a wide area. For instance, there is the "Boma"—or Government—Hill; the Hospital Hill; the Mission Hill; the Mandala Hill, and so on, each one more or less self-contained; and altogether they form a fairly large population. It is situated among beautiful mountains, on a plateau 3,000 feet above the sea, and healthy enough for young children—and there were a goodly number—to look bonny.

It may be judged by these few details that Blantyre is by no means a solitary station. Occupying as it does, such an important position on the direct highway through Central Africa, every traveller going or coming in almost any direction must pass through it.

I went one afternoon to the tennis courts to see the final contest of a tournament. When the games were finished, the six or eight small boys who had been throwing up the balls came eagerly forward for their pay, and I was amused to see that they each received two needles—two, because it had been an extra long afternoon.

On the Friday at midday, the booming of a gun

was heard ; and a little later, at lunch, I noticed that some rather nice buns were on the table. The connection is not quite obvious, but I was informed that the gun is fired once a week at noon, to give the time, and that as the buns which had attracted my attention are always provided on the same day, Friday is known as "Gun and Bun Day."

While I was there two members of the London Missionary Society arrived on their way home, and took infinite pains to give me all the useful information they could for my guidance across the plateau beyond Lake Nyasa. They encouraged me considerably more than most of the Blantyre people. One man was absolutely crushing. I had been explaining my ambitious project to him, and when I finished up by inquiring if he thought I should be able to get across the German territory, he replied, "Well, Miss Hall, I can only say. I hope the German Government will not allow you to try."

The residents of Blantyre, the majority of whom are Scotch, are sociable, and hospitably inclined, and I spent a delightful week there.

I have not yet touched upon the most interesting feature of the place, namely, the Church of Scotland Mission, founded in 1875. Three interesting pioneers of this Mission, viz., Messrs. Cleland, Bowie, and Henderson, were within three months—November to February, 1890-1—laid in an African grave.

Before his fatal attack of fever, however, Mr.





BLANTYRE CATHEDRAL



Henderson had done great work in choosing the site where Blantyre now stands, and people unacquainted with African life are apt not to realise what a momentous question this is.

On one of his journeys, Mr. Henderson found himself skirting one side of Mount Zomba, and being delayed ten days by the illness of his servant, he had leisure to reconnoitre. He felt that he was on a high, healthy plateau, the river, the only means of communication with the coast, not far distant; in short, an ideal spot for his purpose. But he left the final decision until he should be joined by his colleagues, who were daily expected. Thus it was that this bright spot was selected, and called Blantyre, after the little Lanarkshire village where David Livingstone was born.

One afternoon I drove to the Manse, which is situated on the Mission Hill, and approached through an avenue over a mile in length, of tall and stately blue gum trees. Dr. Alexander Hetherwick, M.A., F.R.G.S., the present head of the Mission, and his wife received me very kindly, and after tea took me over the church, the exterior of which is after the Moorish style, with a white cupola. It was built entirely by native labour, under the direction of the architect, Dr. Ruffelle Scott, one of the early missionaries. It contains some beautiful windows, one of which was designed by Sir Frederick Leighton.

The Mission Hill is quite a small colony in itself, as about 400 sleep in the surrounding buildings

nightly. It was too late for me to see over it the first afternoon, so Dr. Hetherwick suggested my making an earlier start the following day.

On my second visit, the medical superintendent acted as my cicerone. We went over the schools for elementary education, and some natives in the more advanced English class read and translated quite fluently. One or two English compositions which we picked up and read were very funny, and afforded us considerable amusement, although I only wished I could have done half as well in their language. The printing shop is most complete, and proves very useful and remunerative, as all the printing connected with the Mission, as well as outside work, is done there.

At the carpenter's shop I saw some suites of furniture being turned out, which would do credit to Tottenham Court Road! There is one white overseer to all the workshops. They also have a class for needlework, in which the native girls are taught to make and mend clothing for themselves or the white people. And lastly, there is an excellent hospital. The climate being of such an equable temperature, most of the patients are able to be out of doors for the greater part of the day, and they are to be seen lying about in little groups in the shade of the beautiful trees. The hospital is in charge of two white nurses, assisted by several coloured girls.

The Sunday after my arrival I attended the English service at 11 a.m. The native service

had been held earlier, but twelve of the elder native schoolgirls were present. They gave a pleasing touch of colour to the scene, and helped to keep the primary object of the church in one's mind. Their attire consisted of a white skirt under an upper garment which looked like a short night-dress, with the neck bound in red. A sash of the same colour completed the costume.

After the service I had a conversation with Dr. Hetherwick about Robertson, one of his native pupil teachers, whom he was allowing to come as far as Tanganyika with me, as I found it difficult to get an ordinary "boy" who spoke English well enough to be my sole interpreter. I felt so utterly helpless, not being able to speak the language, that it was a great relief to me to feel I had at least one person on whom I could rely.

The A.L.C., although providing all camp equipment, told me that it would be better if I purchased my own bed and bedding, which I did. I got what is termed an X bed, which folded up into a very small compass; and the mattress, sheets, blanket, and mosquito net were packed in a waterproof bag. I supplied myself with various other requirements, and started a small store of medicines, as I was told it would be necessary not only to doctor myself, but all my men!

It was arranged that I and another passenger should drive—note the word, for you will not see it again for some time—to Zomba, the Government capital, Blantyre being considered the commercial capital.

We were rather delayed in starting, but got off before nine o'clock. It was a glorious morning with a delightfully crisp feeling in the air, and the mountains and hills all around looking particularly fine. We passed through a large tract of country, chiefly devoted to the cultivation of coffee and cotton. The former is reckoned to be very good, and commands excellent prices in the London market.

• At the time I travelled on it the road was in good condition, but I believe it varies considerably according to the season. We had four mules and a good driver, so soon after mid-day had covered 24 out of the 40 miles we had to go. After the usual rest-house lunch we resumed our journey. I was afraid we should find it very hot at that time of the day, but fortunately our road lay through a wood, where the shelter afforded by the foliage tempered the heat of the sun, and made travelling very pleasant. Presently we caught sight of the Zomba Mountain; it looked so near in the clear atmosphere, that we felt we were nearly there quite 10 miles before we reached it. The natives we passed seemed very frightened of the mules, and men as well as women left the road, and fled yards into the high grass at the sides, to get out of their way. What would they feel like at the Bank or Piccadilly Circus?

I noticed the women who passed us all wore very thick brass anklets, and most of them the "pelele," a disk of wood or bone about the size of

a penny, inserted in a slit made in the upper lip, which it causes to project in a horizontal position, with hideous result. It must be extremely uncomfortable to the wearer, and I should imagine would make conversation rather difficult, but I have heard it said that after a time they cannot speak without it. Some of them had a curious ornament, which looked like a tiny tin bowl, stuck in a hole made in the wing of the nose.

As every one and everything going up-country must pass along this road, it is a very busy thoroughfare. We were constantly meeting or overtaking tenga-tenga men—men who carry loads. When their burdens are heavy or cumbersome, they fasten them midway between two long sticks; then when they want to rest they lean their loads against a tree, and thus can easily replace them on their heads, by the aid of the props, without the difficulty of picking them up from the ground.

## ZOMBA

Zomba is a pretty place nestling to the side of the hill from which it takes its name. It is laid out with flat roads parallel to each other, at different heights up the mountain, and these are crossed at right angles by others. All their names are indicated on sign-boards, which I believe was also the case at Blantyre until the lions destroyed the posts. The whole place is lighted by electricity, and is generally very much up to date. I went over the power-house, the machinery of which is utilised in

the daytime for sawing wood to make planks for building purposes.

I strayed one morning into a tiny cemetery, where I found seventeen men had been laid to rest—only two out of the seventeen had passed beyond the twenties. It was but a few steps from that quiet spot to a centre of great activity, where a large church was being erected for the Scotch Mission. The converts had apparently outgrown the smaller one. As usual, all was native labour, even to the making of the bricks, which I saw being turned out by hundreds quite close by.

The head of the station is extremely energetic, as he is the medical man of the Mission as well as minister of the church. His wife and the trained nurse kindly showed me over their little hospital and grounds.

I made a point of visiting the tennis club on a "ladies' day," and found at least a dozen ladies present, and all enthusiastic players. Tea was served as at any club in England, except that it was handed round by black boys in long, white shirts; but for this fact, it was difficult to believe that this social gathering was in Central Africa. Notwithstanding all this civilisation, a lion had been shot only a few days before almost on this very spot.

Another place of interest was the original Residency, now used as Government offices, set in a beautiful old-world garden. At the back was a large circular group of lovely pointsettias, with

their red and green leaves out at the same time. I had always wanted to see them thus, but had never succeeded before, as usually the green leaves have fallen before the flowers bloom.

The new Residency, where I was hospitably entertained, is a much more imposing edifice. The situation is high and healthy, and the views all round are charming. Later on, during my months of wandering and inevitable discomforts, my mind would often revert to the delights of the palatial room and European luxuries which I enjoyed for a few days at Zomba.

I should not deserve the name of tourist had I not made an effort to get to the top of the mountain, whence there is such a beautiful view of the surrounding country. So one morning I had a machila and a team of boys, and began the ascent.

• It is very steep, but they managed wonderfully to carry me over the roughest and most trying places. I was ever ready to let them rest, as when stationary I could better appreciate the wonderful panorama disclosed at every turn. At my feet stretched many miles of well-wooded plain, and in the middle distance, ever and anon glistening in the sun like glass, lay Lake Shirwa, with the peaks of the Mlanji Mountains piercing their way through the mist in the background.

When I arrived at the top, a lady who was staying there met me, and kindly offered to be my companion across the plateau, and to show me the valley on the other side. On our way thither we

stepped aside a few paces to see a charming little cascade; the water was splashing and dashing in wild delight over flat granite slabs, and the banks were covered thickly with various ferns, the maiden-hair being conspicuous. This little nook has been the scene of many a happy picnic.

On this elevated plain are delightful walks in all directions, over hill and dale, and the air is delicious. It is an ideal spot for a "week-end" or health resort, for the people of Zomba, who quite realise the fact. The "Boma" has a club there; the A.L.C. a house; and there are a few private bungalows.

I did not dare to be carried at the steepest places going down, as one false step on the loose stones might have been very serious. But in spite of the fatigue of scrambling down over rough and precipitous ground, I thoroughly enjoyed the return journey, for the evening glow brought out and revealed other charms in the landscape, quite as entrancing as those I had admired going up.

At last the time came for me to tear myself away from my enchanting surroundings, and with hearty good wishes from all whom I had met, I took to the road again. I skirted the Zomba Mountain for some time, and had a chance of seeing how picturesque and well wooded it was. We made good progress, as the carriers were fresh and the road excellent and downhill.

On my arrival at Zomba I had found Robertson waiting for me. He looked clean and neat in



a nsaru, or piece of white calico fastened round the waist, and hanging to the ankles, rather like a skirt. In addition he wore a short cotton coat, but nothing on his head or feet. It was a great comfort having a boy who could speak English always near me. His work now was to run by the side of the machila, to give me any information he could about the country, or translate any order I might wish to give to the men. After a long experience I found these native "boys" always excellent runners; 12 to 15 or even 20 miles was a fairly easy day. Certainly they had nothing to carry, not even their own small bundle, but then, unlike the porters, their real work began when we reached camp.

A friend had been kind and thoughtful enough to send his cook on 17 miles the day before, in order that I should find a meal awaiting me at mid-day. So I sat down to a gala repast of soup, chicken, rissoles, vegetables, wine, and a good soufflé. After I left, the boy had to re-tramp the 17 miles. This is only one instance of the great kindness I met with all through the country.

At about five o'clock Liwonde was reached, where the collector proffered me hospitality, which was most welcome, as the rest-house was very inferior, and certainly not of the kind one would be over-anxious to sleep in. The "Boma" at Liwonde is prettily laid out, overlooking the river. In the native language Boma means "stockade," and as a Government station is invariably sur-

rounded by a wall, it is generally known as "The Boma," although the term is very often applied to the chief place in any location, for the same reason, namely, that these places are always fenced off from their surroundings.

The state of the river did not allow the ss. *Monteith* to come so far as Liwonde, so I had to go across country for a few hours to join it at Ndumbo, where I found I was over-due by about two days—a mere trifle in these parts. The waiting passenger had well occupied the time by shooting, so that we had the advantage of fresh meat for lunch.

The few hours' steam upon the Upper Shiré to Fort Johnson was a pleasant change from the machila travelling of the last few days. The scenery was fairly picturesque, and my fellow-traveller had good sport in "bringing low" many a "croc" who, until that fatal moment had been lying prone upon the banks basking in the sun.

#### FORT JOHNSON

Fort Johnson at the present time reposes a few miles south of the bar, at the outlet of the Lake Nyasa. I say "at the present time," as this is the second site it has had, and even now things are not considered quite satisfactory, so there may be yet another move in store for it. There was only one white lady in the place at the time, and she kindly undertook to show me the little there was to be seen: the Government offices, stores,

and church. The latter I did not see to advantage, as it was undergoing repairs, but it is interesting as being the first built in the country. But *the* thing of the place is the Queen Victoria Memorial Clock Tower, which, owing to its superiority, somewhat dwarfs its surroundings.

The collector was good enough to ask me to lunch, and we were joined by his colleague and the doctor. I felt my chances of intercourse with Englishmen were getting fewer every day, so made the most of their society while I had it.

There is a very fine view from the Collectorate of the river and the beautifully wooded mountains beyond, and as Fort Johnson is the port of the lake, it is a fairly busy place. Lack of water made it impossible for the lake steamer to come anywhere near the quay, so we were taken out in a barge to her anchorage. The river at this point is in a very overgrown condition, and promises, unless a great deal of labour is expended on clearing it, to become a complete swamp, and utterly impassable. The water was so shallow that even in a barge, and keeping to the channel, we were constantly stirring up the grey mud from the bottom. It took us two hours to cover a few miles of the river and a lakelet called Pamalomba, a sheet of water separated from the lake proper by the silting of its bed.

## CHAPTER V

### LAKE NYASA

Board the *Domira*—Dine on the *Chauncy-Maples*—Land at Kota-Kota—Meet the Bishop—Likoma—Cathedral—Curiosity of the natives concerning me—The baobab tree—Storm on lake—The Kungu fly—The women's ornaments—Fashion in hair and teeth—Mount to Livingstonia—Spend week-end at Mission station

I CONFESS that my spirits sank somewhat as I neared the *Domira*, and saw what a tub she was, and how frightfully overcrowded with natives. She was rolling a good deal, and I was prepared to see most of the passengers precipitated into the water at any moment ; but fortunately for them, they seemed to possess a wonderful facility for clinging on like flies. My spirits descended still lower when I was shown the accommodation, or rather lack of it, for white people ! I went headlong down a flight of break-neck steps, and found myself in a square space in which were two beds ; on one side were two doorless entrances to the cabins belonging to the captain and engineer, and another side was formed by the end of the boiler, which when heated made the place insufferably

hot. The captain gallantly gave up his cabin to me, and the four competitors for the remaining three beds had to do the best they could. I believe the odd man out, sheltered for the night in the small saloon above, which had been built on to the boat as an afterthought, and gave it a very top-heavy appearance.

The *Domira* is an old boat of about 80 or 90 tons. The Company have a newer, and I believe, a better one, the *Queen*, but she was *hors de combat*, undergoing repairs. However, we all shook down in time, and things turned out better than might have been anticipated. Fortunately we were on land, or stationary during the day, so that the fires were let out, and only re-lighted at night, when the draught caused by the movement of the boat during the coolest hours of the twenty-four, tempered the intolerable heat we should otherwise have been subjected to.

As we had taken so long to get from Fort Johnson to the boat, we did not get under way until late in the afternoon, which prevented our seeing the beauties of Monkey Bay by daylight. I was sorry for this, as, by general consent, it is considered one of the finest bays on the lake. By the light of the moon I could just distinguish the bold, rocky headlands, but had to draw upon my imagination to complete the picture: the water, clear as crystal, lapping on a beach of beautiful white sand; beyond, the straggling village, and from the shelter of the neighbouring trees, peering

out at the strange visitors, hundreds of baboons and their smaller brethren, after whom the bay is named.

We could see the lights of another boat, the *Chauncy Maples*, belonging to the Universities' Mission, which had anchored in the bay for the night ; and as I knew that my two travelling companions, who had left me at Blantyre, were on board, I had a dinghy lowered, and went over to call.

We hurried away from Monkey Bay in the early hours of the morning, hoping, if we were not detained long at Domira Bay, to make Kota-Kota that evening. However, on arrival there we found a passenger awaiting us with so much luggage that our hopes proved futile, and we were obliged to spend the remainder of the day where we were.

During my afternoon rest I was startled by hearing female voices, and the owners of them soon made their appearance in my cabin. The *Chauncy Maples* had overtaken us, and they had come over to invite me to spend the rest of the day with them. This I gladly did, and it enabled me to have a thorough look over the boat, which the lateness of the hour the night before had prevented.

It was named after Bishop Maples, who was unfortunately drowned some years ago in this very lake. She is a good, seaworthy ship of about 200 tons and 200 horse-power, and it is said, "if she could be got down the Zambesi, she is strong enough to travel home under her own steam." She was brought from England in marked sections and put

together on arrival at Nyasa. Altogether there were 3,500 packages, 2,000 of which weighed 56 lbs. each, that being a man's load. The greatest difficulty, which "croakers" predicted would be an utter impossibility, was the conveyance of the boiler across country, and evidently it was a very serious matter, as at one stage of the journey it required 450 natives, quite a small army, to haul it over the most primitive of roads.

Knowing I should be interested in the boat, my friends suggested a tour of inspection. On the main deck, amidships, is the chapel, which is also used, with the altar screened off, as a class-room. The after part is taken up with machinery and the captain and engineer's cabins. On the lower deck, under the chapel, are four small state-rooms for Europeans, and right aft is a large open space with sleeping accommodation for native students. The mess-room and bunks for the native crew are in the fore-castle.

There are, as a rule, about four white men on board. The priest in charge at the time described the routine, and the uses of the steamer, which can be divided under three heads—

- (1) To oversee the lake-side villages.
- (2) To serve the European stations.
- (3) To provide a travelling theological college.

There are over forty villages on the lake shore under the supervision of this Mission, each containing a school with a small Christian community, varying in numbers, and two native teachers.

It will be seen from the above that there are 80 native helpers at work, but to allow for ill-health and absence from other causes, the complete staff generally numbers about 100.

The *Chauncy Maples* carries the different members from place to place when on duty, or when going on furlough. It also conveys luggage and provisions between their stations as required. As I said before, it is a theological college for native teachers, who are changed about occasionally, when sickness or little disputes with their chief make such an exchange desirable.

It was late when I was ready to return to the *Domira*, and I did not look forward to the trip across the bay, as the water was alive with hippos, and had one chosen to come close to our frail craft the result might have been disastrous. However, I got safely back without any such catastrophe, but I could hear them keeping up a gruesome concert round the steamer all night.

#### KOTA-KOTA

The next morning we arrived at Kota-Kota, where there is a collectorate, an A.L.C. agency, and a *terra firma* station of the Universities' Mission. Soon after landing we met the Bishop on his way to the lake. He was a striking figure in full ecclesiastical costume, all spotlessly white, even to the gaiters, and he wore a magnificent crucifix, attached to a gold chain, round his neck. He, and several members of the Mission were going, in their smaller



• Mission boat, to assist at a festival a little way down the lake.

Two of the staff were at home, and we looked over the church, which is a long building, with a low stone wall and deep thatched roof supported by natural wood rafters, which look very quaint. It is situated on one side of a kind of village green, the various houses connected with the Mission being dotted about in the vicinity. The missionary who showed us round was having a new house built for herself, and we went together to read over the roll-call of the brickmakers, the majority of whom were children. The little ones crowded round, and promptly shouted an equivalent to "here" at the call of their names, which meant another penny due to each for a day's work. They were happy little souls, and seemed to look upon their employment as a huge joke.

The bricks are all made of ant-hill dirt. So many had been made at this particular place that the hill had become a hollow, in which the men were treading the earth with water. This dough-like substance was then taken up and shaped in a rough wooden mould, after which it was dried in the sun, and then baked in a native-built kiln.

A new branch of work started at this station is a school for the blind. It was only in its infancy, but the few who had already taken advantage of it proved what an immense boon its development will be to the poor afflicted ones.

At evensong I was the only member of the con-

gregation who used a chair, which had been thoughtfully carried over for me from one of the houses. The members of the Mission, including several ladies, worshipped native fashion, sitting on the ground.

The Universities' Mission differs from the other Missions in several essential points. In the first place, its energies are devoted entirely to Central Africa ; in the second place, its members have to remain celibate as long as they are attached to it ; and they are unremunerated, all their expenses being defrayed by the Society, and their meals served at a general mess.

After a very interesting day several of the missionaries escorted me to the boat, and wished me good luck and God-speed as we sailed away.

#### LIKOMA

Likoma, our next stopping-place, is one of the largest islands on the lake, and measures roughly four or five miles by about two and a half. It lies very nearly midway up the lake on the east side, and only a few miles from the Portuguese coast. The name means "beautiful" or "desirable," and it may be for either or both of these attributes that it has been chosen by the Universities' Mission as their headquarters. It is an episcopal see, and contains the thatched "Palace" of the Bishop. Lest the term "headquarters" should be rather misleading, let me say that in connection with South African Missions it simply means a few more white

people living under a few more thatched roofs, with possibly, as at Blantyre, Likoma, and Mengo, the addition of a building worthy of the name of church.

On landing I hurried round to see what I could of the schools before they closed. There was a very large number of pupils, and all the classes seemed well organised. The white mistress was absent, but there were several coloured teachers at their posts. I spoke to one, who was very proud of having been to England with one of the Mission ladies. I wanted to get a photograph of the scholars, but found it very difficult to cope with such numbers satisfactorily.

The women, true daughters of Eve, were very inquisitive, and when they found I was not a missionary—they had never seen a white woman who was not—they wanted to know all about me. They evidently considered me a harmless kind of lunatic when they heard I was not married, and had come all that way for “a walk” as they express going anywhere for pleasure alone.

I visited several of the missionaries' quarters; they each have a bedroom and a sitting-room, and much ingenuity is displayed in the production of furniture from anything that may come to hand in the way of packing-cases, and such like. There is a common dining-room, as at all the stations.

Printing is a great feature of Likoma; many books have been excellently printed, and a large library accumulated.

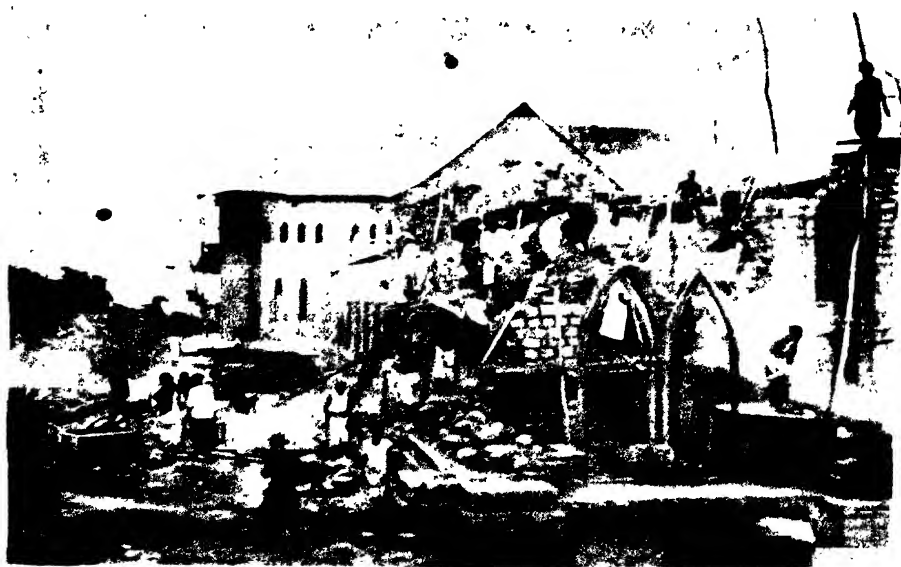
The cathedral was in course of construction, and

natives by hundreds, under the supervision of able headmen, were working like bees at their allotted task. Some of the men were excellent masons and carpenters ; others, less skilled, carried the heavy and cumbrous materials ; women followed each other in quick succession with loads of various kinds, and children of both sexes had been enrolled in the industrial army, to do what they could, and many a miniature bronze figure was seen toddling along, balancing on its little head a burden of one brick. Every workman engaged upon the building was either a confirmed Christian or Catechumen, so that no heathen labour has been employed. It promised to be a fine Gothic building of brick and stone, 280 feet long, with 280 windows, and at the end two towers with pointed wooden spires. The baptistry contains the usual small font for infants, and a larger one for the total immersion of adults. The roof, reredos, and stalls are of wood, and the altar-screen of soap-stone, all beautifully carved by the natives, who were taught the art by the missionaries. A white man was in charge of the carpenters, and the Mission architect was over-looking all.

With the exception of a little iron work, all the material used is native. For skilled labour, the remuneration varies from 2s. 8d. to 10s. per month ; unskilled, 1d. per day, or 2 yards of calico per week. It will be seen from this, that although the cathedral will be a very fine building, it has not necessitated enormous outlay.



SCHOLARS AT LIKOMA



LIKOMA CATHEDRAL IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION



The captain and engineer of the *Domira* came ashore for the day, and this was made the occasion for an improvised football match. The native considers it the height of pleasure to play English games with the "white man."

The baobab, or cream of tartar tree, is very plentiful on the island. These extraordinary trees have been described as the elephants and hippopotami of the vegetable kingdom. Individually it is weird-looking enough, but collectively it gives the landscape a positively antediluvian appearance, and I instinctively looked round, expecting to see some prehistoric animals in the neighbourhood. Its main trunk is very thick, often 30 feet in diameter at the base, and has a smooth, dirty grey coloured bark. No branches project from the trunk until some distance from the ground, and then the limbs are nearly the size of a small tree. The foliage is sparse, and the pods containing the cream of tartar hang from the branches by long, thin stalks.

At night we said goodbye to our kind hosts, who all came down to the water's edge to see us off to the steamer. As I looked back from the little boat, the white-robed missionaries made a pathetic picture as they stood on the bank, waving their lanterns as we rowed away, and I wondered how long it would be before they were in touch with the outside world again.

Likoma does not lie on the ordinary track of the steamer, and it was only owing to the courtesy of the A.L.C. that I was able to visit it. Therefore,

having gone so far out of our way east, we were obliged to re-cross the lake to the west, encountering by the way the much-dreaded "Mivera," or south-easter, which is the devastating wind of the lake. Our goods and chattels were most demoralised, for they were thrown upside down and all over the place. I felt as if I were making a cross-Channel trip in a cockle-shell. However, one must not judge by appearances; our little "liner" weathered the storm, and brought us "to the haven where we would be," in this case Nkata Bay, a charming little spot surrounded by hills.

#### NKATA BAY

Up to this time we had not seen much of the general scenery surrounding the lake, as nearly all our travelling had been done at night, but that loss was quite counterbalanced by the amount of time we were thereby enabled to spend at the different stations where we landed. Nevertheless, I saw enough to know that the greater part is beautiful; high mountains or well-wooded hills lie on either side, and the coast-line is broken at intervals by numerous little bays. The monotony of the water is relieved by small rocky islands, where thousands of cormorants are monarchs of all they survey.

The lake is over 1,700 feet above the sea-level; it is 370 miles long, and the width varies from 10 to 50 miles. Fish is abundant, and so—worse luck!—at times, is the "Kungu" fly, which I understand is peculiar to this lake. At certain seasons of the



year these flies are more troublesome than at others, and sometimes myriads of them are blown on to the land, where they find a resting-place on tree and shrub. If they happen to alight near a village, their hours are numbered, as the natives are on the watch to gather them up and make them, as they think, into delicious confectionery! There is no accounting for tastes.

## RUARWE BAY

It was only a short run from Nkata Bay to Ruarwe Bay, where we remained the night. We had time before sunset to row up to a picturesque little waterfall, and then take a walk through the village, which was particularly clean and well-kept.

As usual at that time of the day, the women were all outside their huts, pounding away at the millet seed, which they would later convert by boiling, into a stodgy substance, to place before their lords and masters for supper. As the native has only two such meals daily, at each he devours a huge pile. Consequently, the wife is kept busy preparing that alone, to say nothing of what she requires for herself and children, who have to eat apart from the men. All of them were bedecked with brass ornaments, which mostly took the form of a high spiral cuff, reaching to the elbow, composed of row after row of brass, about a quarter of an inch wide and the same thickness, twisted round the arm. To make it take the shape satisfactorily, it is put on when the brass is hot. Once on it is never taken

off. Sometimes the arm underneath becomes very sore ; but human nature seems to be much the same all the world over, and the goddess " Fashion " has a very large following among our dusky sisters, from whom she exacts as many penalties as from us.

Neither are the men altogether free from vanity, and much care and attention is lavished on having the hair cut in quite the latest style. They first grease it with oil made from the ground-nut, and then form it into small balls about the size of a pea, which gives it very much the appearance of astrakhan. On this groundwork their creative faculty is allowed to run riot. One dandy will have winding paths shaved so as to leave tufts of hair like large buttons all over the head ; another will have a crescent shape left jauntily on one side of a bald pate ; a third prefers it on the top, and so on. One I noticed looked as if he had a Scotch cap on, and quite a favourite mode is to have the head shaved entirely with the exception of a parting, if one may call it so, formed of hair, and perhaps three or four little locks about 3 inches long, bound in thin wisps of straw, hanging over the forehead.

It interested me very much when in the machila to note these different styles of coiffure, as the men came in front to carry me, and it became the chief means by which I could identify them. I thought if they could only see some of our poodles they might get a hint or two for their next great *shauri*. Teeth also are subject to fashion,

and are cut in many ways ; when prettily notched it is quite an improvement ; but it is extraordinary to me that the teeth do not suffer from this practice. From all I could gather they do not, and certainly they always looked in a perfect state of preservation.

While I was interesting myself in the native customs, the captain was measuring the quantity of wood necessary to carry us to the next wooding station. The faggots are all piled up to a certain height and thickness, and the amount required is measured off in calico, so that although it may not be worth its weight in gold, it is worth its length in cloth.

I had now passed from the influence of the Universities' Mission to that of the United Free Church of Scotland. The contrast between the two was very marked, the former being characterised by all the pomp and ceremony of high ritual, while the latter retains the simplicity of the Evangelical Church.

Having crossed the lake to Likoma, I was obliged to forego seeing Bandowe, the place chosen by the Scotch Mission for a second attempt to establish their headquarters. It is said to be one of the loveliest spots on the lake, but after a fair trial it proved to be most unhealthy, as was the case at their previous station at Cape Maclear, so it was abandoned in favour of Condowe, now known as Livingstonia.

By special permission the boat was to remain in Florence Bay for two nights, to enable me to visit

this interesting place. There are decided advantages in being a pioneer tourist.

On board was an agent of the Company who also desired to visit the Mission, and as he knew the ropes, it made matters easy for both of us.

#### LIVINGSTONIA

As we steamed into Florence Bay we could see numerous figures rising from the ground, which we knew must be the men sent to carry us up the hill. On landing a note was handed to me, containing a warm welcome from one of the missionaries, and inviting me to go direct to her house.

It was a climb of three hours, through delightful sylvan scenery, to the Mission plateau. There was a broad, well-engineered road, winding and zig-zagging up the hill, but the men displayed a decided *penchant* for short cuts. Some of these were so steep that I was obliged to have the machila reversed, or I should have been topsyturvy; as it was I did not feel particularly safe in a one-pole machila, but the men are very careful and seldom have an accident.

Livingstonia, like Blantyre, is essentially an industrial Mission. Dr. Laws, a broad-minded, well-read, practical man, and his wife have worked together in the country for more than a quarter of a century, and the success of the stations is largely due to their able administration, coupled with the devotion and zeal of their colleagues.

The schools are well organised and in good

working order. There is a training college for native teachers, who, when qualified, are sent to outlying stations, with excellent results. Being Saturday, we could not see any work in progress, but we walked through, and observed how thoroughly well equipped each department was, especially the printing workshops.

Such an extensive station naturally entails a large working staff. Their houses, which are scattered about, together with the schools and other buildings, form quite a suburban colony.

The view from the station is very lovely, and the Livingstonia Mountains, which lie at a distance of 30 or 40 miles on the other side of the lake, appeared, I should say, at their very best on the Sunday I was there. At any rate, it would be difficult to imagine anything more perfect of the kind. Mount Waller, jutting out on the right, presented a bold outline in the clear atmosphere, and the sphinx-like face which it forms seemed to smile upon the scene.

The Mission occupies an area of about 2 square miles on a plateau 4,400 feet above the sea-level, and 2,900 feet above the lake. The air at this height is very exhilarating, and during my visit it was positively cold, so I thoroughly appreciated the wood fire which was burning brightly in my bedroom at night.

Above the Mission are yet higher plateaux, to which the *personnel* resort for health and recreation.

While dressing, I noticed a bamboo stick placed upright across the window, and on inquiry was told that it was put there to keep out the leopards, but as I was not disturbed by them, perhaps they were visiting elsewhere that night!

Wild animals are very numerous, and not so very long before, one of the colony espied under a tree, in broad daylight, what he imagined to be two buck sleeping. He threw a stone to arouse them, when, to his horror and dismay, up rose a lion and lioness, whereupon he ran for his life as he had never run before, and arrived at the nearest house perfectly exhausted. If the animals had given chase he would have stood no chance, but fortunately they must have been taking forty winks after a good meal.

The following day being Sunday, we all went to the service, which was conducted in the native language by Charles Domingo, a coloured preacher, who apparently delivered a very stirring sermon. He had just returned from inspecting the outlying Missions, and I was told, had found them rather lukewarm. As he felt very keenly upon the subject, and wished to rouse the congregation, he spoke perhaps with more warmth and feeling than usual. The English service for the members of the Mission was held in the evening, and was attended by a large number of our darker brethren also.

Next morning a thick mist, almost worthy of Scotland, enveloped the mountain. We made an early start, so as not to delay the boat unneces-

sarily. About half-way down we were met by a man with a note, carried, as is the native custom, in a slit at the top of a stick, which the bearer shows to any white person he chances to meet. He had evidently loitered on the way, for he should have delivered the letter the previous day, which would have made all the difference in our arrangements. It was from the captain, requesting us to go to Deep Bay instead of Florence Bay, where we had left him. This alteration meant an additional four or five hours' journey, for which we were entirely unprepared. For such a distance we required more men, so the agent hurried on to recruit as many as he could from Florence Bay, and luckily, we were able to obtain a sufficient number to take us on. It proved an interesting route, and we were not sorry circumstances had forced it upon us.

The first portion led through a dense forest, the lurking-place of many wild animals, and several times we saw across our path the quite fresh spoor of a lion. It was a little uncanny, and I wondered how far he had got, and whether there were many more in the vicinity watching us from the jungle, with an eye to a future meal.

When we emerged into the blaze of the sun again we were on the borders of a small cove. The men, in order to avoid going round, made a bee-line for the other side. I rather enjoyed the novel sensation of being carried only a few inches above the water, in a reclining position, with the

spray from the splashing waves cooling my face, and perhaps the possibility of our all being submerged at any moment added zest to the experience. Towards afternoon we saw the *Domira* swinging at anchor, which made us feel at home once more. It appeared that the lake had been tremendously rough while we had been away, and they had been obliged to take the boat to Deep Bay for safer anchorage, and even there steam had been kept up, and the vessel headed against the wind. Livingstone was evidently not far wrong when he called Nyasa the "Lake of Storms."

While we were satisfying our hunger, the engineer made me laugh by telling me that the boys had been asking him why they were waiting so long, and when he said, "For the lady who has gone up to Livingstonia," they exclaimed, "Ah, Modzi, Modzi, Queen pa England!" which means roughly, "Ah, she must be very great, just like the Queen of England."



## CHAPTER VI

### KARONGA

Customs of natives vary—Meet Dr. Laws—Baptismal service—Caravan formed—Provisions sorted out—Engage two new boys who are “written on” to Victoria Nyanza

ON the West Coast, nearly at the head of the lake, stands Karonga, the terminus of our interesting and successful lake journey, which, with the frequent and prolonged stoppages, had occupied from the 3rd to the 11th of July.

From an artistic point of view the situation of Karonga is delightful, as indeed almost any place on the lake must be, but as a port it is decidedly ill-chosen : landing is always more or less difficult, and in rough weather quite impossible, as the boats are always obliged to lie some distance out, and passengers and goods have to be carried through the water. The elements being unpropitious when we arrived, we did not attempt to land, but proceeded a few miles beyond to the little sheltered bay of Kambwe, where we found machilas and men waiting to take us back to Karonga. By this time I had become an adept in the art of getting into

a machila, so I found no difficulty in accomplishing the feat from a small rowing boat. This was necessary, as there was much bog and swampy ground to be got over before we reached the path.

The Mandala of the A.L.C. at Karonga ranks next in importance to their station at Blantyre. The store, houses, tennis court, and all outbuildings are enclosed by a high brick wall, with apertures for guns; but these holes have been stupidly built with the smallest opening pointing outwards, which makes them quite useless as a means of defence! But we are a hopeful nation, and leave them unaltered, trusting that there will be no repetition of such hostile demonstrations as occurred some years ago, in which Sir Frederick Lugard took such a prominent part and has fully described in "Our East African Empire."

On my arrival I was given a room in the old building, and was certainly not impressed with its cleanliness or comfort. I therefore resolved not to make a longer stay than was absolutely necessary; but happily at tea-time the conversation turned on bats, and various objectionable insects, which were said to frequent the house. The agent, noticing my look of horror, very kindly suggested giving me his own room. From that moment I was quite contented, as it was in the new building, and beautifully clean, light, and lofty. With these altered conditions, I was glad to stay and get a good rest, and so fortify myself for the trying journey across the Tanganyika Plateau.

The entire white population consists of two officials (one with a wife and child) at the Boma ; a Government doctor, with his wife and small baby ; the missionary, his wife, and two children ; two agents of the A.L.C., and a trader.

There were several native villages quite close, and here the people and their customs differed somewhat from those already met with. They looked much less civilised ; and as regards dress, only a few wore an apology for clothing, the majority showed no inclination for raiment of any kind. Their ideas of fashion were displayed in their ornaments : such as the high spiral cuff, already described ; earrings of various designs ; bead necklaces ; and last but not least, wonderful girdles made of copper wire twisted round hair, and fitting the body tightly.

The missionaries always welcome and make one feel amongst friends, and those at Karonga were no exception to the rule. I lunched and spent a pleasant afternoon with them, and was shown over their house and the Mission buildings. The former overlooks the lake, which from that point of view has all the appearance of a sea, and like the sea, is always interesting and varied.

Walking past the house the next day, I saw the place surrounded by tenga-tenga men, who had thrown themselves exhausted on the ground, amid the medley of machilas, dirty bundles, baskets, pots and pans, inseparable from an incoming caravan. I knew from this that Dr. Laws, who was expected,

and another missionary and his wife and children—*en route* for home—had arrived from the plateau, and I was delighted to think I should meet the interesting head of the renowned Mission.

I did not attend the morning service on Sunday, as it was in the vernacular, but advantage was taken of Dr. Laws's visit to hold a baptismal service in the afternoon, to which we all went.

We found the church crowded with natives, who had arrived long before the appointed hour. They were sitting on forms, and lustily singing hymns to pass the time. We, the white people, had chairs near the platform, where Dr. Laws officiated. The black parents with the children about to be christened sat in the front row. They were swathed in drapery of different colours, and one woman was very smart with a tight dog-collar of coloured beads. This was quite a new "mode," for up to this time the women had simply worn long, loose strings of beads hung round their necks.

The ceremony was quite simple. Dr. Laws gave a short address, and a prayer or two interspersed with a few hymns. As the names of the parents were called, each couple brought their offspring to the platform, husband and wife standing together while the doctor sprinkled the infant's head in the customary manner, and gave it a Christian name.

After about seventeen black babies had been christened, the first white boy and girl born at

Karonga were brought forward : the missionary's little boy was eleven months old, and the infant daughter of the Boma doctor and his wife, only six weeks. The latter was given Karonga as one of her names. :

In the evening the few white people on the station assembled in the Mission-room to join in a short English service. It was a delicious evening, and as we walked back, the lake looked enchanting in the clear, silvery light of a full moon. The white population is somewhat scattered about the station. I found no objection to the distance in the daytime, but after dining and spending the evening at the "Boma," it was not pleasant having to go at least a mile, feeling that a leopard might pounce upon me at any moment, and was probably only being kept at bay by the chatter and noise of the machila men. The full moon was a decided factor in my favour ; nevertheless, I heaved a sigh of relief when I was safely within the protecting wall of the "Mandala." Mine were not idle fears, as leopards were known to be in the vicinity, and only the previous week one had visited the veranda of the Mission and carried off a dog.

Of course I went to see the tiny baby of the place. She looked sweet, sleeping on the balcony in her snowy cot, with its little mosquito curtain.

Her father and mother walked back with me, and I noticed a little off the road, a table under

a tree, from which a few cords were dangling. This, they told me, was the butcher's shop. When the native butcher proposes to kill an ox, a notice to that effect is sent round to the white people on the previous day. Once they were apprised of the fact by the following startling announcement: "A bule will be murdered to-morrow morning at 6 a.m." But history relates that this cold-blooded crime, so carefully premeditated—even to the exact hour—was not committed, as the following morning a second notice was issued, as follows: "The bule ran away this morning, so was not murdered." This, however, was an exceptional case. The usual course is for the customer, on receipt of the notice, to write down which part of the animal he wishes to have, and the choice falls to each in turn. The "Boma" fixes a uniform price for the whole, and here it was threepence a pound. After the white people are supplied, the remainder is sold to the natives, hence the necessity of the butcher's shop under the tree.

I heard a good story one night, which is so characteristic of the native that I will repeat it. The man who related it told me that the incident occurred when he was on a journey, and suffering from a bad attack of fever. One evening he fancied he would like some eggs, and told his boy to get a couple and boil them lightly. After a time, they were brought to him as hard as bullets. He told the boy he must

get some more, and 'boil them less; but alas, these were brought to him in the same condition, and the poor fellow wished he had never ordered them at all, but being unwilling to give in, he made another attempt, and told his boy, "Come to me when the water boils." The boy did so. "Now," said his master, "put the eggs in and when you have counted fifty, take them out." The native method of reckoning is to count up to ten, and then begin again, arriving at the total by the number of tens counted. My *raconteur* said he heard the boy start fair, and get as far as four tens, when a second boy interfered, and questioned whether it were the third or fourth ten. This started an argument, and as they could not agree, it was decided to begin all over again! Meanwhile the eggs were still 'boiling, and getting harder and harder. This was about the last straw, and ill as the poor man felt, he was compelled to get out of bed and put a summary end to the culinary operations. This was the kind of treatment I had to expect if I were 'taken ill on safari (journey).

I was very busy during the six days I remained at Karonga. There was much to be done preparatory to starting on quite a different phase of my journey. Hitherto I had been on a more or less frequented route, with rest-houses by the way, and there had always been at least one white person with me; but henceforward I was to be entirely "on my own," and had fearful misgivings as to

how I should get on. Although I was no novice at travelling, I had never done anything quite like what I was on the eve of undertaking.

The A.L.C. were responsible for all my camp equipment, machila, food and cook, but it was necessary that I should personally see that all was in order before I started. I tested the machila, and the tent was put up to see if it met with my approval. And, what was very important, all the provisions had to be sorted out; this took some time, as nothing is done quickly in Central Africa. The agent had put out what he knew by experience was necessary, such as oatmeal, flour, rice, tea, coffee, sugar, soap, candles, oil, and matches; my part was to concentrate my mind on the choice of a few of those delightful tinned delicacies to which I had the least objection. Meat in tins I tabooed, but made a goodly selection of soups, biscuits, Californian fruits, jams, cocoa, and condensed milk. Chickens and eggs I hoped to get on the way.

As Robertson had only promised to go as far as Tanganyika with me, I was advised, before leaving Karonga, to engage another "boy," who could speak English and Swahili, to go as far as Victoria Nyanza; that was, if I ever lived to do it myself, on which point most people were very sceptical. When I found one who apparently answered my requirements, he said he could not possibly go that distance to return alone. Natives are very nervous about travelling far away from







MY TENT



MIKE AND JOHN

their homes and among different tribes, so I engaged a companion for him, who, although he did not speak English, would prove very useful. They both promised to "write themselves on." By this is meant that they register themselves at the Boma, giving their names and the name of their tribe, the place they have undertaken to go to, and the wages they are to receive. As a rule they get a certain amount per month, supplemented by a trifle each week for "poso," or food-money.

After spending most of my morning engaging these two boys, the agent met me in the afternoon with the annoying intelligence that the chief one had come back to say that he had decided not to go. He made all sorts of silly excuses: his mother, he declared, had threatened to shoot herself if he went so far. The real fact was that he himself was too much of a coward to venture on the journey.

Luckily, another boy, whose master had died at Karonga only the week before, was most anxious to go, and as he spoke English in addition to good Swahili, I closed with him at once. Swahili is the *lingua franca* of Equatorial Africa, and probably the most important of the Bantu languages. A knowledge of it, and a little English, makes a boy very valuable to a traveller going any distance, so I was well satisfied when this one, and the boy I had previously engaged, were "written on" the next morning.

My personal staff now consisted of Robertson, Mike, and John. These were practically my parlourmaid, housemaid, and lady's-maid. But according to calculations made by those who ought to know, I was worse off than if I had only one. They say, "One boy is a boy; two boys are only half a boy; three boys are no boy at all."

Men who wished for work used to come and sit on their heels outside the "Mandala" until something was found for them to do. The day before I was ready to start, a large number were allowed to come into the compound, and the agent chose the thirty-six or thirty-eight I required—sixteen to carry the machila in relays, and the others as tenga-tenga men. Their loads were allotted to them the following day, when the name of each man and the description and weight of his burden was registered at the Boma. Until they are "written on" there is not the least certainty of their going.

Although the men were only going half-way across the plateau, they had certain little purchases to make, and such trifles to do as are common in any country on the eve of leaving home, be it a palace or a thatched hut. This naturally prevents one from making an early start on the day of departure. It was therefore arranged that the first march should be a short one; the tent with its belongings, and the cook with his, were sent on in the morning to prepare the camp for my arrival later in the day.

So after lunch I regretfully took leave of Karonga, and for a time, the companionship of white people.

The men were not physically so fine, nor so merry and amusing as those who had carried me from Chiromo to Blantyre. They had been drafted from the outlying villages, and as we passed through some of these, crowds of their "sisters and their cousins and their aunts" rushed helter-skelter after us along the road, friends helping the men to carry their bundles, last messages given, accompanied by much laughter and shouting to speed them on their way.

## CHAPTER VII

### TANGANYIKA PLATEAU

First night out—Fort Hill—Deserted Nyala—The Stevenson road  
—A meeting—Lion-infested camp

WE traversed at first quite a flat country until we reached the Rukuru River, which we had to cross, but all the time we were working our way towards the beautiful range of hills which surrounds Karonga.

At last we arrived at the foot of Mpata Hill, where I found my tent pitched, and the men very busy indeed putting things straight. They had killed—not the fatted calf—but a mere goat, which was suspended from a tree during the skinning process, where I am sorry to say it remained, with my dinner-table quite close to it. I felt very shy and uncomfortable as I sat eating the liver, with my back to the carcase from which it had been so recently extracted! The rest of the *menu* included soup, potatoes, American “pudine”—a kind of cornflour—jam, and coffee.

The Nkonde huts are very superior to those

of other tribes. They are built with a circular framework of strong upright poles crossed by split bamboos held tightly together by native bark rope, the interstices filled in with mud. The roof is of very compressed thatch, neatly cut, and the doorway is high enough for an adult to pass under without stooping. The whole effect is very trim and neat.

The headman of the village called to pay his respects, dressed in a stick and a few brass girdles. We exchanged some signs which were meant to convey polite remarks, and when he had satisfied his curiosity by much staring he went away.

Notwithstanding that the Resident had sent two askari (soldiers) with me as escort as far as Fort Hill, I did not feel altogether easy in my mind that night. It was my first experience of camping, and of being quite alone with so many natives. Lion and leopard stories, highly coloured by a vivid imagination, were very fresh in my memory; also, the recollection of the expostulations of nearly all my relations and friends, against the foolishness of such an undertaking, did not tend to make me feel happier.

I went to bed wondering whether it would be lions, leopards, or hyenas which would disturb my slumbers, and was relieved on waking to find all and everything intact.

The fresh morning air was delightful, and I enjoyed walking for the first few miles beside a

limpid stream, after which we ascended hill after hill, until we were almost on the plateau. We had beautiful views going up, and the outlook from our camp at Sufira that night was magnificent. I could see three or four ranges of hills rising one beyond the other, all thickly wooded to the very summit.

Very few people were about, but one woman visited me, bringing two piccaninnies with her. The smaller one was dressed in a row of big beads thrown over one shoulder and fastened under the other arm. The bigger one seemed very much amused at something, and when Robertson inquired what he was laughing at, he said with charming candour, "the Mzungu" (white person).

As I sat at tea I was interested in watching the rest of my caravan straggling in—men carrying queer bundles and packages, cooking utensils, &c., the "murdered" goat being brought in triumph, swinging by its legs from a strong pole.

#### FORT HILL

I knew we had a long run before us the next day to Fort Hill, so got off as soon as possible. The picturesque scenery continued until we were actually on the plateau, but towards mid-day we joined the Stevenson road, which I might have appreciated better had I been driving instead of being carried in a machila; but in the circumstances, its painful straightness and flatness did not appeal to me at all. As a road, it is a wonderful example of what can be achieved by



native labour. It runs from Karonga to Abercorn, and forms a high-road between the Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika, a distance of 240 miles. Unfortunately, of late years the traffic across it has not justified the outlay necessary to keep it up, so that in places it has almost disappeared.

We halted once or twice on the way, and I much enjoyed having breakfast and lunch, picnic fashion, under the trees.

Fort Hill is the frontier station of Nyasaland and North-Eastern Rhodesia. In it there is a vacated Boma, and as I was allowed the use of this building I thought it best to settle down for two nights, as we were all tired after a ten hours' run. I had been led to expect I might find one of the Government officials from Karonga there, but the sentry told me a lion had been seen near the village on the hills where he was staying, and that he was remaining there with the hope of shooting it; but the next morning he arrived, and said he had had no luck.

I made the boys light some huge logs, in the large fireplace which occupied one corner of my room, for although not really necessary, the situation of Fort Hill is high enough to make a fire bearable and very good company. Before settling in for the night I walked to the garden, and got what I could in the way of fresh fruit and vegetables. The men were very pleased at the idea of a rest the next day, and it was nice to think we would not have to hurry off in the morning.

When the people of the neighbourhood heard that I had arrived, they brought round various things for sale. One woman had nine eggs and some nuts, and as I was always glad to get eggs I sent her round with them to the cook. She soon returned looking very dissatisfied, and showed me a small quantity of what appeared to be gritty sand, but which I found was really rock-salt. It certainly seemed very small payment, so I persuaded the cook to add a little more, and sent her home quite happy, with about two tablespoonfuls of salt for nine eggs!

## NYALA

With renewed vigour we set out from Fort Hill. My cook had gone ahead to Nyala, to prepare my—I do not know whether to call it lunch or breakfast—but perhaps *déjeuner à la fourchette* expresses it better than either. I had it as soon as I arrived (about 10.30 a.m.) on the verandah of a deserted house, and if it had not been for the melancholy feeling that anything forsaken engenders, I should have enjoyed the beautiful scenery all around, and found it difficult to believe there was such a thing as death and sadness in the world; but although nature was so smiling, the situation had proved fatal to the one or two officials who had been stationed there.

Some women from the neighbouring village brought their children for me to see; one was a perfect little picture, decked in endless rows of





THE STEVENSON ROAD



A YOUTHFUL TRAVELLER

beads and anklets. We chatted by signs for some time, and when I gave them what remained of my tin of pears they were very grateful, and formed themselves into a charming group to eat it.

As high-roads can be seen in almost any country, I was not sorry when, after lunch, the no doubt wonderfully engineered Stevenson road became a little "off colour," and not quite so obtrusive, sinking, in fact, for the time being, into oblivion.

Lying comfortably in my hammock I was getting well on my way to the next camp—although metaphorically speaking I was almost in dreamland—when I became conscious that there was much talking and commotion going on around me, and, on lifting my side canvas, I found that a number of porters were trying to draw my attention to their burden. They were carrying a small white child, who was sitting in a novel kind of palanquin evidently made out of a packing-case swung upon poles. It was lined with white calico, and at the bottom was a mattress.

The little girl, who turned out to be the daughter of the missionary doctor at Kawimbe, was surrounded by her dolls, and seemed to be having a very happy time in her portable nursery. Her bearers were all Mission boys attached to her father's station, and they were evidently very proud of their little passenger.

The mother followed close behind, and I found they were on their way to England. We gave each other all the news of the road, and she told

me that this was the only day she had been alone, as her husband had brought her as far as the last camp, and she was expecting some one to meet her at the next. When I told her whither I was bound she expressed much surprise at my temerity, and hoped I should get safely through to my journey's end. •

It was delightful having a little break of this kind in the day's march, and it entirely dispelled all ideas of sleep; but I was glad I had been roused, as the country we were then traversing was rather pretty. We were running along a path which might have been a charming bit of the New Forest at home, and I should have been so sorry to have missed seeing it.

• NYMBO

As we neared the village of Nymbo the road was thronged with people who had assembled to meet me, having heard of our coming from the tenga-tenga men who had preceded us. Numbers of women with their babies tied to their backs, swelled the general *melée* of men, women, and children running by the side of the machila, all shrieking and bawling to their hearts' content, also joining my men in the chorus of their songs, or making a loud guttural sound while tapping their hands against their lips, and occasionally uttering a piercingly high trill, indicative of delight. It was a veritable babel, but it was reassuring to find that such a friendly feeling existed.

They were so anxious to peer into my machila to see what I was like, that they did not always look where they were going, so that it was a not infrequent occurrence for them to trip up, and immediately have four or five others on the top of them, followed by the laughter and jeers of those who were still running.

Nymbo is infested by lions, so I determined the men should keep up big watch-fires, and urged them to do it by reminding them that if they did not, the lions would certainly eat *them* first! I woke up several times in the night, and always saw the flickering firelight through the canvas of my tent, and felt satisfied.

I was misinformed as to it being an ordinary day's run from Nymbo to the Fife Boma; on the contrary, we found it extremely long and trying, and I am quite sure it was only the terror of the lions, if we were benighted, which incited the men to get on. We were all on the verge of collapse when we at last arrived. I had been nine hours exactly in the machila, exclusive of the luncheon rest. Robertson had always run by my side, and as a rule kept up well; but on this occasion it was more than he could do, and the last hour he fell behind, so that when I reached the Boma I had no interpreter, but from outward and visible signs I gathered that there was no white man about.

For the last ten miles our way had lain through wild park-land, with low, dense shrubs on every hand, where it would be easy for any number of

lions to secrete themselves, when fleeing in terror from the noise of the caravan. It is a merciful thing that these animals are nervous; only under stress of hunger, or, perhaps, when they are too old to catch game, or some other exceptional circumstance, will they approach man, especially man (or woman) in motion.

When Robertson arrived upon the scene and we could discuss matters, we learned that the collector was away on safari, and his colleague over at the Mission 9 miles away, and not expected home that night. His boys, however, assured me I might fix up my things in one of the rooms, and said, since they saw me coming, they had prepared me some tea, and killed a chicken in preparation for dinner. I had not then been long enough in Central Africa to feel quite at my ease in taking possession of a house in the absence of its owner in this casual manner, and could only trust that it was etiquette in those parts.

I sent a note by one of the policemen to my absent host, telling him of my arrival, and apologising for my effrontery in settling myself into his house for the night.

Having eased my conscience on this point, I was thankful for the meal which was set before me, and afterwards for the log fire burning in my bedroom. I thoroughly enjoyed the space of a large room after the cramped conditions of a tent.

The next morning I found my note had brought the recipient back. He was full of regrets for not



having been at home to receive me, which, he said, he assuredly would have been had he known I was coming. He told me that they were prepared and waiting to welcome me at Mwenzu, so off we started, along a well-made and picturesque road to the Mission.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FIFE

Mwenzu Mission—A native funeral—Story connected with boy's death—Quaint English of boys—A.L.C. Mandala—Fresh porters—Tattooing—Natives bartering—Mambwe—Highest part of plateau—Saisi—Home-life

TRAVELLING northwards, Fife is the first station in North-Eastern Rhodesia, and is like an equilateral triangle of 9-mile sides, with a little settlement at each angle, viz., The Boma, or Fife proper, at the south angle; Mwenzu, the Mission, to the west; and the A.L.C. Mandala at the north.

The station at Mwenzu, the most northerly of the Livingstonia Mission, was in charge of a descendant of Dr. Robert Moffat, the great pioneer missionary, and a connection of Mary Moffat (Mrs. Livingstone). He, with his wife, and another lady, received me most kindly.

It was one of the alternate Sundays on which a short service for Europeans is held in the Mission sitting-room, and we six (the sixth being an A.L.C. agent) formed the congregation; and

not only the congregation, but, with the addition of two children, the entire white population for 25 miles round.

The Mission house is prettily situated in a garden a little removed from the road. As is often the case when there is a lady at the Mission, most of the "boys" of the household were girls, and there was a funny old grey-headed woman as nurse. At family prayers in the morning they all came and sat on the floor, and the old woman read aloud a translated portion of the Bible, after which they all sang. These little scenes always recalled to me the pages of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

It was entertaining to watch the little missionary child—a fair, blue-eyed, typical little Anglo-Saxon boy, fully clothed and his head protected by a solar tope—playing with the tiny sons of the soil, innocent of all apparel save a bead necklace, and their woolly pates exposed to the vertical rays of the sun. They apparently had an inherent admiration for their small white companion, and instinctively looked upon him as their leader. They would amuse themselves for hours, without understanding more than half a dozen words of one another's language. As it was not a military country they did not play "soldiers," but one day I saw a wonderful arrangement of calico tied to a pole, and a stone put in it, to imitate a machila and passenger. With this they ran up and down the road, chanting as nearly as they could the songs of the machila men.

One night during my visit a youth died in the village, and Mr. Moffat assisted at the funeral in the morning. When we arrived at the grave, all the people were sitting round the hole they had dug, and the corpse lay by the side, rolled in a mat of native straw. Two coloured teachers prayed, before the father and grandfather lowered the body, then all the male relatives—the women being further back—dragged the earth in over it with their hands, and the grandfather worked it down with a stick. They have no particular burial-place, but bury their dead just anywhere they please. They did not show any emotion, and I was told this was because they were Christians, otherwise there would have been a great deal of crying and moaning.

Connected with the death of this boy a very interesting story of love and revenge was related to me.

A few years before, one of the village girls, who was betrothed to a man called Mpanda, fell in love with a youth named Robert Nserema, who reciprocated her affection, and she consequently refused to fulfil her engagement with Mpanda when called upon to do so.

Mpanda was furious, and Robert's father, fearing his anger, tried to persuade his son to marry another girl; this the young man refused to do, and he was thereupon turned out of his father's house, and took refuge in the Mission, where he remained for some time. The head of the Mission found him such a bright and promising lad, that he sent him

after a while to Livingstonia, to be trained as a teacher, and there he helped in the dispensary, as all the pupils have some work allotted to them while they are under instruction.

During all this time the lovers remained true to one another, in spite of the threats of Mpanda, who swore to be revenged. He laid a curse on Robert's family, and told the father that all his sons would die, one after the other.

The following wet season Robert was attacked by pneumonia, and soon succumbed to heart failure, greatly to the surprise of those around him, who had not thought him ill enough to be in danger.

When Mpanda heard of his death, he said—

"I killed him. ~~Keep the girl~~; but all your sons will go in ~~the same way~~."

This was in 1902. In 1904 a second son fell ill at Mwenzo, and died in the same unaccountable way as his brother. After this Mpanda repeated his gruesome prophecy, and just a few days before I arrived at Mwenzo, the third boy had been buried. During the lad's illness the father sent to Mpanda, who was then in German territory, to try and appease him; but he remained obdurate, and still said, "Your sons will all die."

One morning while I was at the Mission, a messenger came to say that the fourth was ill. Everything was done for him by the missionaries. One or other of them was with him most of the day, and in the evening they expressed great anxiety as to what might happen during the night. Although

he was a strong and well-nourished youth of about nineteen, the sudden illness had so prostrated him that he was lying in a complete stupor. They had made searching inquiries as to what he had eaten, but it seemed that he had touched nothing but the food which all the family had in common.

The next morning when I came into breakfast I was told he was dead, and directly we had finished we attended the interment. Thus within twenty-four hours of being taken ill, the poor boy was dead and buried, and just one week after his brother had been overtaken by the same fate.

It was a most curious case, and demonstrates the wonderful power of witchery, which there seems little reason to doubt, some natives really exercise over their fellows.

The residents of Central Africa usually endeavour, at the earliest opportunity, to make new-comers feel safe and comfortable, by telling them all the harrowing lion stories they know; but one I heard here was rather amusing for a change. It was about a native boy at Florence Bay, who, coming across a lion quite suddenly, was almost petrified by fright, but had presence of mind enough to fall upon his knees and clap his hands (the native salute), and say, "Ndiro wa Mission!" ("I am of the Mission"). Evidently he thought, although he might not have been able to express it in so many words, that those connected with the Mission were exempt from all danger; at any rate the lion, after a little deliberation, turned and walked quietly away. Such simple means being

so efficacious, I promptly made up my mind to act upon the idea if I were ever in the same strait.

Another incident happened at the house in which I was staying. A missionary—who at the time of my visit had recently left the station—fancied one night that he heard his dog at the door, and opened it to let him in, but the dog did not appear, and he shut it again. Shortly afterwards there was a thud against the door, and he exclaimed, “There! I knew it was the dog.” However, his wife was suspicious, and would not allow him to go the second time without a gun. Again he called the dog, with no better result, so at last he went in. The next morning he found the spoor of a lion all round the house, and felt what a narrow escape he had had.

To vary the lion stories, I was told some relating to the quaint English used by the natives sometimes. A teacher was once going to an outlying school, taking with him, among other things, some slates and pencils. In crossing rather a big river he had the misfortune to drop the latter in the water, and in describing the incident afterwards to Dr. Laws, he wrote: “Unfortunately, in crossing a river, I drowned all the pencils.”

Another boy was writing to a friend, and presumably wishing to express in simple language the fact that he was alive, said, “I am still breathing atmospheric gas.” Also one day Mike brought me one pair of shoes cleaned, and said he could not do the other, as the medicine had all gone (meaning polish).

When the natives wanted anything they thought the missionary possessed, they would turn over in their minds what they could send to barter for it. One morning, while we were at breakfast, a child brought in five eggs, and when asked what she wanted in exchange, said, "A box of matches." Another time it would be needles, fish-hooks, or beads. .

• After spending a week in most congenial society, I was reminded by the A.L.C. agent, that the porters had been waiting several days for me, and unless I started soon he could not promise to keep them.

Very reluctantly I said goodbye to those who had been so kind to me, and moved on to the Mandala, which is situated on rising ground in the middle of a plain. Seen from a distance it looks like a small citadel set on a hill. It commands, from the front, a superb view of the distant mountains, many miles away. Although beautiful, it is an extremely lonely station, and I cannot think how men are found willing to forego all intercourse with people of their own colour and remain there in such an isolated position.

I enjoyed a game of tennis with the agent, who had just finished making a tennis court. He only gets a chance of a game when some one like myself passes through, or when he receives a visit from the Boma or Mission.

A curious little black and white bird with a long tail kept coming right into the Mandala sitting-room. These birds are called by the natives



"Katiétie," and are suspected by them of being the spirits of departed chiefs, returned to earth in that form. The people rather resent their presence: they think, if they are not their own chiefs, they have only come to pry into other people's affairs. They certainly have a curious little hop, and a most inquisitive movement of the head and tail.

I had to replenish my stores at the Mandala; and when the loads were re-weighed and allotted to the fresh men, I resumed my course across the Tanganyika plateau.

By that time I had gained confidence in this particular mode of travelling, and thoroughly enjoyed the unconventional open-air life, although there still remained just a *souffçon* of fear which saved it from becoming commonplace.

All my fresh porters belonged to the Wembe tribe. "Wembe" is a contraction of "Awaemba," which means "People of the Lake." They are a superior race, and were always the conquering tribe in the earlier raids; but what pleased me most was their musical ability, for which they are renowned. It was charming, being carried along with the machila swaying to the rhythm of their quaint songs, chanted in unison by delightfully mellow voices.

After the usual short first day's run we camped at Nakiwanda, a place to delight an artist. In some past age there must have been a great volcanic disturbance, which deposited huge rocks in all directions; but now bountiful nature has intermixed

them with beautiful trees and undergrowth, with the most picturesque result. Quaint village huts are dotted about, and a meandering stream runs close by.

The rest-house looked clean enough for me to venture on having my bed made up therein, but I took my meals *al fresco*.

July is the mid-winter month, and corresponds to our January. It was now August 1st, so that the weather was getting rather hotter, but as we were so high on the plateau the heat never became unbearable, and indeed the nights and early mornings were decidedly cold.

We covered fairly flat country the whole of the next day, through a sparse and stunted wood, where brilliant-coloured butterflies darted hither and thither, enlivening the scene. The people were intensely interesting to me, and I was evidently equally so to them, for on hearing the caravan approach they would rush out of the villages adjacent to the road, fall on their knees before me clapping their hands, and then run along with the crowd for some distance, chattering to the porters as they ran; and as soon as one party dropped off its place was taken by another. With my men, they formed a motley crew; it was not so much the men themselves, as their impedimenta, which were so weird. Most of their rice and flour was stowed away in the skin of some wild animal, and these headless, four-footed portmanteaux were slung over their shoulders or suspended from sticks or spears.





EXAMPLE OF TATTOOING AND BRACELET



A SETTLER'S HOME. SAISI

Calabashes for water, of all sizes and shapes, axes, knobkerries, and endless other equally strange utensils, went to make up a *tout ensemble* which was only possible in a wild, uncivilised country.

The tattooing on the women was at times quite elaborate, taking the form of a beautiful lace-like pattern on neck and arms. This is done by placing hot corn seeds on the victim's flesh, until large enough blisters are raised, into which some substance is rubbed to keep them at a height above the surface of the skin.

My boys often amused me by behaving like the overgrown babies that they are. One day I opened a fresh tin of biscuits on the way, and threw down the outside paper which had a label at each end—a circle of red, with a blue border, round it. This at once attracted the native eye for colour. Both were quickly confiscated, and stuck for the rest of the day on the foreheads of the happy possessors, who became the envied of all beholders.

One afternoon we met the luggage of a white person, the one unmistakable sign being a bath; and very soon followed what proved, on closer acquaintance, to be a Belgian, on his way home. When he had recovered from the surprise of seeing me, he told the men to halt, and although in the excitement of the moment and the necessary recumbent position in a machila, it was difficult for me to summon up enough French to begin a conversation with an utter stranger, I contrived to learn that the owner of the station a few hours'

ahead of me, was at home. This was very good news, as it meant a night in a room, with all its comforts, instead of a tent, also the prospect of a little social intercourse once more.

It all turned out as foretold, and that evening the combined efforts of our two cooks produced quite a passable dinner. Immediately after it—as in this country, one goes to bed, and gets up, with the sun—I retired to my room, which was aglow with a fire large enough to last all night.

By the time I was up in the morning my host had despatched the cook, and all my heavy loads. While we were at breakfast I could see through the window, all my machila men looking greatly concerned about one of the poles, and on inquiry found they did not think it would last out the day. I have not the least doubt that they knew as much the evening before, but it is not in accordance with their ideas, to let anything of that kind disturb their peace of mind, until the very last moment. Had I not been the guest of a white man, I hardly know what I could have done. However, he set to work, and as he happened to have a strong bamboo pole on the premises, the broken one was soon replaced, and after only an hour's delay I was able to proceed.

There is something peculiarly fascinating in the early morning of a tropical country. Journeying, as I then was, across a plateau at a height of nearly 5,000 feet, the temperature was delightful, and always enticed me to take a little exercise, before the sun forced me to seek shelter from its burning rays.

On this particular morning it was delightful, and I defied the sun for two hours, and had a very enjoyable walk. The path was soft and good, and lay through wellwooded, hilly country. The foliage gave no indication of the proximity of the equator, and had it not been for my carriers and their quaint, soft singing, I might have imagined myself, on an exceptionally fine morning, in Westmoreland or Cumberland.

When we halted at mid-day by a clear, running stream—probably one of the many reputed sources of the Congo—the people from the adjacent villages brought to the porters what food they had for sale. From the shelter of a tree I watched the bartering, and timed the process. It was just half an hour before the produce changed hands. The flour was brought in bowls of various sizes, according to the quantity each particular person had to dispose of. Then my men would thumb their bits of calico, too short, perhaps, to please the vendor, and a great deal of talking would ensue, as the thumb moved a little further along, or the others removed a bowl or two of flour. Thus it went on, until each felt that he had ‘done’ the other. When this happy consummation had been reached, there was not much time left for the cooking of their food, as I never delayed more than about an hour on the way. Consequently when I was ready to start, of course they were not. However, it was no use giving way to them, and as soon as it was time to make a move on they had to go.

While I was having my lunch, all the women and children from far and near congregated round me, and to one small boy I gave a few tinned cherries and a little bread. He at once called his 'mumma' and she emptied them into a little wicker basket, and seemed quite surprised when the juice ran through.

I always noticed that the natives were extremely generous in sharing among their relatives or friends whatever was given to them, however little. Only a few days previously I had spread some potted meat on a biscuit, and given it to a poor old woman; it would only have been a taste for her, but she went off at once to her hut, and divided it among her family. The dear old creature was so grateful that a few minutes afterwards she returned, and placed at my feet a small bowl of native flour for my acceptance. It showed a nice spirit, but she could not quite disguise her satisfaction when I shook my head and said no.

#### MAMBWE

In the afternoon I overtook my best box, and the bearer thereof lying by its side on the ground, with Mike, whose orders were to remain behind the last load, standing over him. I was obliged to take some notice of it, so said as I passed, "Well, Mike, what is the matter with the man?" And he replied, "He wishes to faint!" To which I rejoined, "Very well, I have no objection."



This may seem hard-hearted, but it does not do to attach too much importance to the ailments of these men, at any rate, before them. When the fainting porter found that no fuss was to be made over him, he soon discovered that he was quite capable of walking, and he reached camp all right a few minutes after us.

Mambwe is the highest part of the plateau, and stands over 5,000 feet above sea-level. Once it was a Mission station of French Catholics ; then it became a sub-collecting post of the North-Eastern Rhodesia Administration ; but is now deserted by both, and reduced to a camping-place. The house was in too dilapidated a condition to be of much use, except as a shelter in the daytime, when the sun made my tent too hot.

Soon after we left the following morning, we crossed a corner of German territory : this we knew, as the boundary was marked by a stone monument.

I had strained my foot the day before, so omitted my usual walk ; but in any case I should not have been able to get far, as very soon I had to be dragged through the thick undergrowth, which almost concealed the wet, narrow path. It was very pleasant to hear the swish of the long grass against the machila, accompanied by the singing of the men, who were very spry that day, and went along with a will. Almost before the hour's rest at mid-day was over, the capitao gesticulated to the effect, that he and the men were ready to go on when I was. This alacrity, which as a rule was conspicuous

by its absence, rather mystified me, until I got to Saisi and was told that native food was particularly cheap in that district, consequently the men were always very anxious to get there.

#### SAISI

Now again, after several days, I was to have the pleasure of the society of my own sex, and was met at the porch of an English-looking cottage by its owner and his wife. They had prepared a delightfully home-like little room for me, and would not hear of my going on the next day. I was not loth to stay, and they found no difficulty in persuading me to remain with them for the week-end.

I had been told by pessimists that I should wish myself dead over and over again, before I got as far as the point I had now reached. I cannot say I ever experienced such a feeling, although I had undoubtedly reached a state, when I could fully appreciate the comfort of a little oasis of rest, as it were, in the desert of fatigue and hardship, inseparable from a trip through Central Africa. Therefore I gave myself up to the peace and beauty of my surroundings.

My host and hostess were among the earliest settlers in that part, and they had only been there a few years, the Government up to that time being anxious for the more southern parts of Rhodesia to be occupied first. They are experimenting with cotton, rubber, wheat, &c., but cattle is to be their speciality. They had several

hundred head of stock, looking in prime condition, and there was a fearful stampede every evening at dusk when they were counted and driven into kraals for shelter from wild beasts. At intervals the animals are taken in droves to Salisbury—about 1,000 miles—to be sold.

The estate is delightfully situated with a beautiful view from any part of it, and they have done wonders with the place in the time. It is an enterprising venture of the young couple, and I trust it may be crowned with success. They have built themselves a delightful little abode, and a great deal of the furniture is home-made.

We were all amused at the experience I had the first night. I slept peacefully for some hours, but towards morning I felt conscious of ominous crackings going on underneath me, and a slight sinking of the mattress. The cracks became more frequent, and the mattress sank by degrees until I was nearly on the floor. I felt somewhat embarrassed at wrecking other people's furniture in this manner, but my host put me at ease, by explaining that the strapings which supported the mattress were strips of leather which had been dried too rapidly, and he was not at all surprised that they had given way.

Most of the time I remained with these hospitable friends, I spent in the porch lounging in my deck-chair, my swollen foot making it advisable not to walk at all, so that I really did get a good rest under very agreeable conditions. One evening we had quite a musical entertainment with a gramo-

phone; these instruments are a great boon in remote districts, such as this isolated settlement in North-Eastern Rhodesia, and are about the only form of music available.

For weeks past I had been making inquiries, whenever possible, about a boat to take me up Lake Tanganyika, and as far as I could ascertain at that distance from the scene of action, the probabilities were very much against my getting up at all, and in any case I should have some weeks to wait; so, in order not to miss any possible chance, I thought it better to get nearer in touch with the south end of lake and telegraphic communication.

I did not start till after noon; but had my men shown anything like the form they did when we arrived at Saisi, we should have covered the distance between that place and Kawimbe before night-fall quite easily; but food being so cheap, and "pombe" (native beer) so plentiful, I fancy they had all lived not wisely, but too well, and felt none the better for it. This I gathered from the feverish thirst displayed at every stream we came to.

Darkness overtook us long before we got to our destination. Fortunately I had sent a note on by the men who took the luggage earlier in the day, asking the missionaries at Kawimbe to expect me, so I felt confident all would be in readiness.

They had been listening for some time, before they were able to detect the noise which is always the forerunner of a visitor, and they at once started to meet and accord me a welcome. Tired, and a

little anxious for shelter, I was peering into the darkness, when at last I was able to make out three figures moving towards me, which I presumed were the Europeans, followed by most of the house boys, and a few stragglers. In the background, the thatched roofs of the houses and huts, looking black against the light of the grass fires from the surrounding country, made a picture which I wish I could fix permanently on my mind, as one fixes a negative on glass.

## CHAPTER IX

### KAWIMBE

Tip my porters—Robertson leaves me—The village—Native customs—West of Tanganyika—An upset—Katwe—Kamboli—Versatility of missionaries—News of boat—Hasten to Abercorn

THE next morning I was cordially invited to remain for a few days, and assured that I could easily get the required information about the boat from there; in fact the Doctor was sending a special runner to Bismarckburg that very day, who could take a note of inquiry for me. So I decided to stay; but I knew I must not keep the men waiting any longer, so I arranged to send them and my heavy loads on to the A.L.C. agent at Abercorn. My host kindly spoke to the porters for me, and made clear to them exactly what I wanted done. I was interested in a long talk which he had with the captao, who was apparently a very intelligent man, and I envied the missionary's facility in speaking to him, as that is of course the only means by which one can really get in touch with the people. I found travelling shorn of a great deal of its interest, from not being able to converse freely with those around me.

I gave the thirty men half a crown's worth of salt between them as a tip, over which there was great glee. I presented the cook with a fez, price one shilling, and sent him off as pleased as Punch! His "boy," or washer-up, was made equally happy by two pounds of salt. As Robertson had practically completed his engagement, and I could not induce him to go further, I thought it better he should return across the plateau with the rest of the men, so he also left me at this point. I was sorry to part with him, as he had been a good boy, and done well.

Kawimbe is the first station of the London Missionary Society. The influence of this Society, which had its origin at Udjidji about 1876, and finally settled at the other end of the lake in 1882, permeates the south end of Tanganyika, and extends as far west as Lake Mweru. The three or four private houses, the church, schools, stores, carpenter's workshop, and granary occupy positions on the sides of a large open square. The church was being re-thatched, and its bell fixed outside.

The gardens of the Mission seemed to be most prolific, and I saw good promise of peas, strawberries, &c., plenty of parsley, carrots, and tomatoes. Freshly grown vegetables are essential for the good health of the white residents, so it is very necessary that the gardens should be well cultivated. A little further on is a tiny cemetery containing all that is mortal of the four or five former missionaries who gave up their lives for the good cause.

The distance between the Mission station and the nearest village is about a mile. It contains some three or four hundred people, and is extremely clean and well kept. The Europeans stationed at the Mission are practically the County Council of the village, sanitary and like arrangements being under their control. They also allot fresh plots of land to any one who may apply for a site on which to build a hut.

I went into one or two of the little native dwellings; the first one was very primitive, the thatched roof sloping down so far that I was afraid I should have to crawl in on all fours. Underneath this circular roof there was a surrounding passage, where the occupants lighted their fire and cooked their food. The centre part was divided by mud walls into two or three—I cannot say rooms—but sections. As a rule there is no window or light of any kind, except the little that can penetrate through the open door, under the overhanging roof. The bed was made of reeds, placed on the right-hand side, with the head nearest the door, which I was told is the invariable custom. In a little place, where perhaps the children might be put to sleep, I noticed a tiny hole in the mud wall, about 2 inches square; this was the solitary window of the establishment.

The next hut I visited belonged to a woman who was formerly in attendance on some of the Mission ladies, and had evidently imbibed a few European notions. A large skin was spread under a table, by



which stood a chair, and in the corner of the room were some pegs for hanging up her things. The pictures on the walls were very amusing; they were mostly sheets of fashion plates, cut from some English illustrated journal, and one was merely a large-typed advertisement placard for the *London Magazine*. Relatively speaking, this hut, with its high-class furniture, and "old Masters" might be looked upon as the Buckingham Palace of the village.

There was a social gathering outside, of about nine or ten girls, sitting on mats, who had evidently come for a good gossip. They were all very smart, and some of them quite nice-looking. Most of them had their bushy hair decorated with designs carried out in red and yellow powder. The red pigment is canwood, and the yellow, daisy powder. They grease their heads first, to make the powder adhere when placed in the desired pattern. One, I remember, had a number of circles, formed of a dab of red, surrounded by alternate rings of red and yellow. This fashion of dressing the hair is very pretty and effective.

In the lobes of their ears they wear thick wooden discs about 2 inches in diameter, studded with brass nails. I was told it took some time to get the aperture big enough to hold these ornaments. Several girls will have their ears pierced at the same time, and then keep up a competition to see who can get the most matches or bits of wood in daily, until the hole is stretched sufficiently.

Many very pretty bead collarettes were also worn, and all had some cotton drapery swathed round their bodies and fastened under the arms.

The customs of these people are also interesting and peculiar ; for instance, a woman of the Bantu race, south of the equator, may not mention her husband's name until she has a child, and in some tribes—the Zulus in particular—never. In fact, they carry the idea so far that she may not use a word likely to suggest it. For example, if the name were Brown, she must not talk of brown bread, or brown potatoes.

One day a woman came to the Mission and said she wanted some medicine. The missionary's wife inquired if she were ill. She said no, but she wanted it for some one. This was rather vague, and the lady, not knowing their customs, asked for further particulars. At last the girl said, " You know the 'boy' I want it for—he does such and such work in the shop." And it then turned out that it was for her husband, whose name she dared not mention.

Again, a man is supposed never to see his mother-in-law, or she him, and if they chance to meet they must hide from one another. Sometimes this is a little difficult, so if they meet in the open where there is no cover, they are allowed to take up a stick or reed, and pretend to hide behind that. This is called "ceremonious hiding."

Occasionally I misjudged the natives through not understanding their customs. I once passed a hymn-book to Mike, which he took without a word of





FASHION IN HAIR



OPEN AIR SERVICE. KAWIMBE

thanks, and as I was thinking to myself "How rude!" the missionary said, "Do you notice how polite these boys are? When you passed the book to Mike, he took it with his right hand, and placed his other at the elbow, which implies both 'Please,' and 'Thank you.'"

Another day when at Mwenzo, knowing that my hostess was short of "girls," and that my "boy" had very little to do, I called him and suggested that he should go and offer his assistance. "Perhaps you might fetch some water," I said, "or chop a little wood for them." At once his face fell, and to my surprise he gave a very half-hearted response. I could not understand it, as he was always a very willing boy, and I asked Mrs. Moffat if she could explain how I had offended him.

"Oh, naturally he was upset," she replied; "fetching water and hewing wood are considered quite the lowest form of labour, but he will be delighted if I ask him to help the cook, or do some washing, for they look on cooking and washing as quite superior work."

As the church was under repair, the Sunday service was held outside the house. Mats were laid on the ground in preparation for the congregation, and the harmonium was brought out on to the verandah, whence the people were addressed by the missionary. The drum boomed its reminder to the people in the village that it was time to set out for the service, and we saw them in twos and threes, strolling leisurely down the hill, and take up their

position on the mats. The women all sat together, nearest the house ; then the male natives grouped themselves, graduating according to age, from the small boys to the grandfathers. The minds of the people were somewhat distracted by their curiosity regarding the stranger, but on the whole they were very attentive.

During the service, a messenger appeared with a note, and regardless of the fact that the pastor was praying at the time, went up and gave it to him. Afterwards, when I remarked on this, the missionary replied, " Natives never scruple to interrupt you in any circumstances. A few years ago, when there was only a monthly mail, it happened to arrive on a Sunday. The post-boy, dressed in a uniform something like a bright red bathing gown, startled the congregation by dashing right up the church in great triumph, and depositing the letter-bag at the minister's feet."

There is no lack of occupation for the workers on the station. Twice a week the women from the surrounding country bring in all the flour they can spare, in baskets of various sizes, carried on their heads. These are taken in, and the flour put on the scales ; then each woman receives in return a little paper chit, marked a penny, twopence, or threepence, as the case may be. Later on these chits are exchanged for coin with which the natives buy salt, calico, copper wire, or beads.

The cattle and herdsmen require keen supervision, otherwise, before you are aware that there is

anything wrong, you are told that you are minus a cow.

Difficulties and misunderstandings between husbands and wives also have to be talked over and smoothed away by the white man, besides medical aid given to the sick in the villages. Thus the busy days at a Mission station come and go in quick succession.

After a fortnight's stay I was still without news of a boat. There were supposed to be three plying between the north and south of the lake, but none seemed available. I could hear nothing of the Belgian boat; the English boat, *The Good News*, would not be seaworthy until overhauled; and the German boat was under repair at Udjidji, and it was very doubtful when she would come south again. However, on such occasions in Central Africa there is nothing to be done but wait patiently, and on thinking matters over I decided, in the interval, to take the opportunity of going off my route a little to see something of the south end of Lake Tanganyika.

The A.L.C. had finished their part in connection with my trip, so I now had to make my own arrangements. I borrowed a tent, a machila, and a few pots and pans, enough to serve me for the little cooking I should require during the four days' journey to the next Mission.

I had spent a very peaceful time at Kawimbe, and felt much restored in mind and body. I was thinking only the night before I left, what con-

— confidence I had acquired in the natives. My bedroom door led out on to the open country, and I had slept in the room for over a fortnight without a fastening to the door, practically at the mercy of the whole of Central Africa, and yet there was no need for fear!

I had a great “send-off,” and if good wishes were to have any effect, a fine time lay before me.

The first day I was only going as far as Abercorn, a matter of two and a half hours. The intervening country is charming, and at that particular season the hills looked simply perfect, covered with trees dressed in their new spring garb, of every tint between bright scarlet and deep beetroot. They brought to mind the vivid autumnal tints of the maple trees of Japan. It is a curious fact that in Africa the spring tints are those of the autumn elsewhere.

I only passed the night in Abercorn, so will reserve my first impressions of it until I return to it later, when I shall have others to add.

We were on our way early the following morning, and all day our route was delightfully varied, though tiring, as I was obliged to walk up several hills, over very stony paths. The trees continued glorious, and the surroundings quite different to those across the plateau—more wild and forest-like, interspersed with thick jungle. We bore all the time round the lake to the west, until we reached our camping-place on a hill, whence a panorama of surpassing beauty stretched itself



before us. At this elevation we caught the wind rather, and as the men had not put up the tent very tightly I passed a restless night.

Mike was not such an early riser as Robertson, so it was 6.30 before we got away next morning. I started walking but we soon came to a small stream, just too wide for a jump; and before I realised what they were doing, the men snatched me up to carry me over. The result of their haste was, that they did not get a proper balance, and we all toppled into the stream together! The men were much concerned and very contrite; however, there was not much damage done beyond a wet skirt, and a lost *last* hat-pin. Only a woman will fully comprehend what a "last" hatpin means, in a country where it might be months before one could get another!

I took off my skirt, hung it over the machila to dry, and walked on in my petticoat: a little unconventional, no doubt, but I knew there was no chance of my meeting any one but natives, who would not know the difference.

After rather difficult climbing up and down rocky passes, we came upon a soft, flat path over the sward, through miles of delightful woodland. We made a short mid-day halt, and arrived at Katwe in the afternoon.

#### KATWE

As I sat on the verandah of the rest-house all the village people flocked round to see the unusual

sight of a white woman alone. The women wore rather elaborate bead ornaments, but very little else, and after a time the *bouquet d'Afrique* became so pronounced, that I requested Mike to make known to the visitors that I was tired, and the reception was at an end. They very reluctantly withdrew, with an injured air, expressive of having been done out of half the show.

After a little rest and a refreshing wash, I returned their call, and found the village dirty and ill-kept—a marked contrast to those under the control of a Mission.

My bed was put up in the rest-house, but I had a wretched night, as rats and mice abounded, and I longed for daylight when I could make a start.

#### KAMBOLI

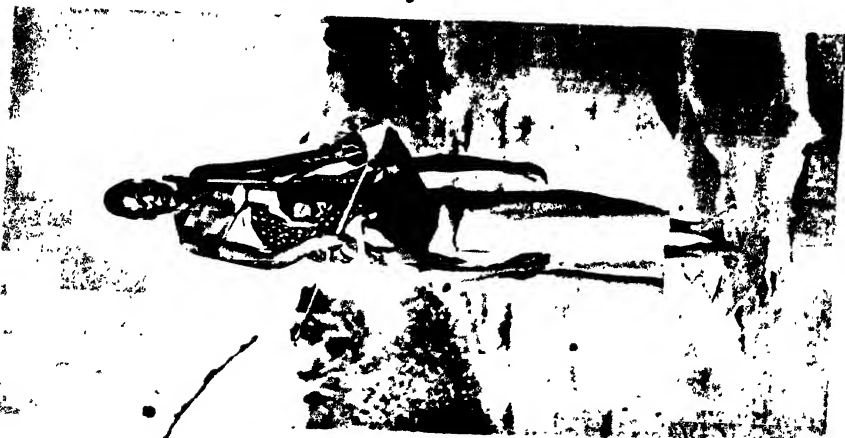
A few hours brought me to Kamboli, situated on a high plateau at the south-west corner of Lake Tanganyika. I was made very welcome by the missionary and his wife; the latter was almost as new to the life as I was, having come out only two months previously to be married. Her husband had prepared quite a good house, new and well built, so I had the advantage of a very comfortable room, in which Mike and John fixed up my bed, and various little etceteras for a short sojourn.

My host was a "fundi" (master) at photography, and showed me some remarkably interesting negatives typical of the people and country.

During my stay we made two delightful



MAMBWE WOMAN



CARRYING A CHIEF



OLD STYLE OF MUTILATION



excursions, one to the Ngozia Fall. The other to the magnificent Katanga Falls, where by the side of the water under shady trees were some flat rocks, which formed an ideal spot for a picnic. From this point the water dashes headlong over the brink and falls a sheer 500 feet into the ravine below, rushing on through a lovely, densely timbered, but inaccessible valley to the lake. We could not see the stream itself, but we could trace its meandering course by the trees on its banks, which were of hues varying from light yellow to brown, while the tints of those not under its influence ranged from a bright scarlet to magenta, mixed with a delicate emerald-green. Beyond this mass of gorgeous colouring lay the lake, hidden in the silver mist of the distance. It is a view that defies description, and only the barest idea of its beauty can be conveyed by mere words.

Dr. Livingstone's ideal of a missionary's household was, that "the woman should be a maid-of-all-work indoors, while the man should be a jack-of-all-trades outside." This is without doubt really essential. My host represented the industrial, and his colleague the clerical section of the Mission, but this did not prevent either of them being called upon at any moment to do all kinds of extraneous things.

As I sat on the verandah one morning, an old woman came to the steps and made dolorous signs that she was afflicted with toothache. I called

Mr. Turner, who took in the situation at a glance. He disappeared for a moment, and returned with his forceps. There were no such trifles as a dentist's chair or gas; the woman remained standing, while he, on the step above her, jerked his arm upward to signify "Open your mouth," which she did, and in the twinkling of an eye the tooth was out.

The church at Kamboli is a very picturesque structure; it has a heavily thatched roof, which is supported by two rows of five whitewashed tree-trunks. As at Kawimbe, the natives divided themselves into groups according to age and sex. The tiny children were very interesting; when they were tired they got up and sauntered out of church with easy dignity, quite unconscious of not having even a bead to clothe them. After a time, possibly finding it lonely outside, they would return in the same light and airy manner and sit down again.

The congregation sang with great gusto; they must possess excellent memories, as they knew all the hymns by heart.

After church the versatility of the missionary was again exemplified. Every Sunday, after the service, the minister attends at the dispensary, and the native's love of being physicked makes this very arduous work. On my way to Kamboli one of my men said he had a very bad cough, brought on through carrying the machila, and he wished to go back. I told him this was impossible, and

that as we were near the Mission he must go on. So now that there was an opportunity of investigating his complaint, I sent for him, and his temperature was taken. It was ludicrous to see his huge mouth open, and Mr. Ross endeavouring to place the thermometer under his tongue! I thought it would have been crushed to atoms; and after all, there was nothing the matter with him.

I was rather hurried away from this delightful spot by receiving a note delivered by a runner from Bismarckburg (formerly Kasanga), informing me that the German boat was coming down the lake on a special trip, and would be leaving again for the north about September 6th or 7th. As it was then August 30th, there was not much time to lose, so I was obliged to leave the following morning, and instead of going to Abercorn, *via* Niamkolo, had to return the same way I came.

All at the Mission joined in helping me with my preparations. One set to work, and converted the single-pole machila I had brought from Kawimbe, and disliked, into a double one. My host was equally busy in getting me some extra men and giving out their "poso"; he also arranged that one of his most trusty "boys" should precede me, and have the tent ready for my arrival on the first night out; while his wife, "Martha like," busied herself in seeing a chicken cooked, and packed with some bread and butter, the latter item being a great luxury.

John, my second boy, was down with fever,

which made it necessary to leave him behind; and as Mrs. Turner promised to look after him I felt he was in kind and efficient hands. Mike did not at all approve of this procedure; he became very disagreeable, and tried to persuade me that he was equally bad. I told him I knew better, and that he must not give way, but exert himself to look after me.

After I had said goodbye to my kind host and hostess, the "boys" of the house all stood in a row, evidently wishing to shake hands with me, *à l'Anglaise*; so that my leave-taking was quite impressive.

We passed through Katwe again and lunched there, but I was glad to leave the rats and mice to their own devices, and go on another two or three hours before halting for the night. My men were very contented, as they always are, when their "nose-bags" are full. They had been given flour enough to last them until they got to Kawimbe, so I hoped that, in spite of their improvidence and want of forethought, it would, at all events, hold out to Abercorn, which was as far as their doings concerned me.

I had a great number of porters, twenty-five for the machila alone, so that we were a very gay camp that night. The men kept coming in with their arms full of green leaves; these I found they put under their mats, and made quite comfortable beds for themselves. They certainly know how to make the most of the means at hand.



Wood was also brought in, and, judging by the quantity they heaped up, I thought my tent would be a veritable fiery furnace.

Our camp was rather congested that night, owing to the clearing being smaller than usual. However, as it was in a thickly wooded district and on an unfrequented route, it gave me a greater feeling of security to have the fires and men nearer to me.

The men kept up a buzz of conversation, but all were silent in a moment when one little clique—more devotional than the others—began to chant their prayers. Directly they had finished the talking began again, and continued until I thought it was time for all to be asleep, so I called out “Chongo” (“Silence”), when stillness fell upon the camp, broken only by an occasional cough or a whispered remark. It was a curious but soothing sensation on waking in the night to hear around me a perfect symphony in snores.

The following night there was no clearing, and we were obliged to pitch our camp a little off the track in a thicket, amongst short, dense undergrowth, which spells insects, and I had not been there long, before I had “murdered” several large beetles, which, according to Mike, bite badly; therefore I was very careful to have my mosquito net well tucked in.

It was always interesting to study the different temperaments among the men, and to watch how a few cheerful ones would keep the less happily

endowed majority in good spirits, and make them forget their weariness, however tired they were. There was one very fine fellow among this lot, who was full of life, and kept them all in good humour. He was considerably over six feet in height, with a splendid physique, of which he was fully aware. One has a good chance of judging of their anatomy when about a yard of calico is a complete costume. I always picked out such a man to urge the others on if I were in a hurry, as I was on this occasion. I was most anxious to reach Abercorn in time to send a telegram to Bismarckburg before noon on Saturday, knowing that wherever Englishmen congregate, they continue the home custom of keeping the Saturday afternoon a holiday.

Unfortunately, when I arrived at Abercorn, I found the telegraph communication was blocked, so that if I wished for definite information about the boat I must send a special runner.

These runners are most useful, and go long journeys in a comparatively short time. As a rule one man goes the whole distance, but if the message is very urgent the note is passed on to fresh men at the different villages on the way, so that it is kept going day and night; but even then, if it is far, it takes days before one can receive an answer.

## CHAPTER X

### ABERCORN

Description of plateau—The township—Return of the collector and his wife—Procure tent and machila—A terrier joins the caravan—Leave the heights for lake shore—Niamkolo—A weary wait for the steamer—Cross the lake in Mission dug-out

ABERCORN is an elevated township on the plateau, 14 miles from the south end of the lake, and enjoys, for those parts, a salubrious climate. It is the Government headquarters of North-Eastern Rhodesia, and the residence of a Collector, a Commissioner for native affairs, a Postmaster, and an agent of the A.L.C. These, with the wife of the Collector, made up the entire white population at the time of my visit; only a few years before, when the telegraph wires were being carried to Udjidji, and the rubber trade from the Congo was in full swing, the number was trebled. At present, it is in a transition state: no doubt when the Cape to Cairo Railway has a station there, it will become a very important and busy place.

I have already explained that the proposed rail-

way will arrive at the south end of Tanganyika from a point midway between Lakes Bangweolo and Nyasa, my route having been considerably to the east of the projected line.

I know how easy it is to get confused about exact geographical positions, even of places nearer home, so at the risk of appearing tiresome to those who know the country, I will recapitulate a little, roughly indicating the direction which I took.

From Chinde, until I left the Zambesi, I was travelling more or less to the north-west; up the Shiré, and across the Shiré highlands, to the top of Lake Nyasa, my course lay almost directly to the north; over the Tanganyika Plateau, I was trending decidedly north-west again, and when on Lake Tanganyika I once more headed directly northwards.

The plateau is about 240 miles long, and from ten to fourteen days is the usual time allowed to traverse it. The men go about 17 or 18 miles a day, so it will be seen that they are much slower than those who carried me from Chiromo to Blantyre. The scenery runs the whole gamut from the sublimely beautiful to the commonplace; as a whole the country is well timbered, although the trees are of no great height or size. There is plenty of game for those who seek it, and birds and flowers are to be seen, but not to any great extent. White people are to be met with now and again, and the natives are friendly.





THE BOMA, ABERCORN



THE MISSION DUG-OUT

During my stay at Abercorn, there was a very breezy feeling in the air, which made its Scottish name seem quite appropriate. Like Bulawayo, it is laid out on rather ambitious lines, which may possibly be justified when the iron horse makes its appearance, but which are a little disproportionate to the present scanty population. Near by is a delightful little lake called Chintā. The names of places are continually changing, and through my wanderings I shall simply mention them under the appellation by which they were known at the time. There are also some interesting walks in the neighbourhood, and for sportsmen unlimited means of satisfying their love of killing something.

I was shown over the prison, which contained about twenty prisoners chained together in groups of three or four. They were lodged in small rooms, and except for the lack of freedom and being made to work hard all day, they did not seem badly off.

On the day after my arrival, I heard the distant noise of an incoming caravan, and knew the Collector and his wife had returned from their long safari. They immediately offered me hospitality which I gladly accepted, and the transformation from the rest-house to their comfortable English home was very delightful. All the residents gathered there in the afternoon to welcome them back. The captain of the A.L.C. boat, *The Good News*, who had come up from Kitutu to recruit after a bad attack of fever, was also there,

and as five or six people in that part of the world make a crowd, it seemed quite a social squash.

On talking over my prospective journey with the Collector, he strongly advised me not to trust to getting a tent and machila further up-country, but to take with me all I required: this was rather disconcerting, as I had been told I could get all I needed at Udjidji, so had not provided any equipment beyond my bed. However, I was fortunate enough to get the loan of a tent, and I was able to buy a machila, bath, table, and chair, so felt independent as far as the more serious part of my outfit was concerned. I hoped to get food and cooking utensils at some of the head townships I had to pass through.

During my visit here it was suggested to me that as I had no firearms, a dog might be useful, to at least warn me of approaching danger; so a new member, by name Mafeking, joined our caravan from this point, and proved a faithful and cheerful little companion to me for the remainder of my journey.

On Wednesday, September 6th, I got notice from Bismarckburg that the boat was on her way down from Udjidji, and would call for me at Niamkolo, so I had to "hustle."

The A.L.C. had been my bankers so far, and before leaving I had some business to transact with them, also to exchange some English money for German. After that I was ready, though not altogether willing to leave my comfortable quarters.



I had requested that the boat should call for me at Niamkolo in preference to Kitutu, as it was considered the less unhealthy place of the two. In either case I had to descend to the level of the lake, and knew it would be extremely hot, so I was anxious to make an early start.

I was up before daylight, but the men did not put in an appearance till some time after. I then personally allotted them their loads, took down their names, and sent them on ahead. By that time the house boys had awakened their master and mistress, who were quite concerned because I had done so much myself, when, as a matter of fact, I had rather enjoyed doing it than otherwise, and I was well on my way before eight o'clock.

Soon after starting, much to my relief, we met John, who was wending his weary way up to rejoin my retinue. He was better, although not quite strong, and I was sorry to have to tell him he must return with us, in case ~~the~~ boat should be waiting when we got to Niamkolo.

The route was over native tracks, through lovely woods, and we made our midway halt by a charmingly picturesque stream, which we had followed for several miles. The men made up somewhat for lost time, but in spite of that, the heat was tremendous before we reached our destination, and the descent into such a vaporous atmosphere after the invigorating air of the plateau was very trying.

Kitutu is situated at the extreme south of the lake, and Niamkolo lies a little to the north-east, where the London Missionary Society have formed a station, and by degrees are not only converting the people to Christianity, but they have cleared away an immense swamp from which emanated much of the fever, thus rendering habitable what was formerly a deadly locality. Apart from the religious question, it is by improvements such as this that the Missions do so much to open up the country.

Another reclaimed swamp they have laid out as a perfectly wonderful market garden, producing European as well as native vegetables, including sweet potatoes, lettuces, tomatoes, beans and peas, and the fruit garden was overflowing with oranges, lemons, paw-paws, grape-fruit, guavas, and mangoes.

They have also taught the natives lake-fishing; one man is kept entirely employed by the Mission, and his catch, as well as the produce of the garden, is divided between this and the two adjacent stations, viz., Kawimbe and Kamboli. A runner is sent twice a week to each place, the journeys taking eight or nine hours each way.

The church here is much the same as at other places, and was fairly well attended on Sunday. A native preached; it is wonderful how cleverly these men have grasped the value of teaching by similes, and this one very aptly introduced me into his discourse that morning. He wished to impress upon the congregation the necessity of being pre-

pared for death, and he said, "You do not know when death is coming, any more than 'Mama' here knows when her boat is coming." I was sitting on the platform, with the preacher and the missionary, facing the congregation, and little thought my name was being introduced into the sermon.

I spent a very anxious week at Niamkolo, waiting day by day for some sign of the steamer. I had terrible forebodings that it would not come at all, and that I should never get up the lake. I sent a runner every day almost, to try and discover some reason for the delay, but all I could learn was that the officials at Bismarckburg were as much concerned as I was. They knew the boat had left Udjidji, and it was several days overdue.

I got desperate at last, and sent a *special* runner, which means a man who is paid two shillings to go 80 miles in two days, instead of one shilling to go the same distance in four. On the Friday I got a letter, written in German—it was lucky I could read it—saying the boat had ~~at last~~ arrived, but as the captain had been left behind at Udjidji suffering from fever, it was in charge of the engineer only, and he did not know that end of the lake sufficiently to come and fetch me. Therefore I must find my way across to Bismarckburg as best I could, as the steamer would be leaving again for the north on Tuesday.

I knew my only means of crossing the lake was in the Mission dug-out. I also knew it would suit the Mission better if I took my departure on any

day but Sunday, and as I did not feel inclined to leave it until the Monday, in case the lake might "turn up nasty," and make it dangerous to cross, there was nothing left but to make a start the next day.

My host was very good, and drummed the men up at four in the morning, and we started to walk to the lake while the dawn was in the sky. There was more water in the boat than I cared for when we started, and as it increased I told the men I was sure we ought not to get out of touch with land until it had been attended to. So they ran us into a little bay, which was swarming with crocodiles, floating about on the surface of the water. I landed, while they emptied the boat and plugged up the holes, which delayed us quite an hour.

The water was very calm over the open stretch of lake which I had been dreading, and after that was crossed I felt easier in my mind. We then ran parallel to the land for several hours before reaching Bismarckburg. We were a very large party in the big dug-out: there were eight men to row, one to bale out water, "Jim," an English-speaking boy sent to "boss up" the rest, myself, Mike, John, and Maffi. I sat at the stern, surrounded by bed, bedding, and a medley of bundles. My travelling rug was thrown over an improvised bamboo structure by way of awning to shelter me from the sun, and as I ate my lunch of chicken, fruit, and cold tea, I ruminated on my strange experiences.

Sitting under the canopy, I floated gently over the almost unknown waters of this beautiful lake, the stillness only broken by the soft, quaint singing of the men, and the gentle splash, as the paddles, dipped to the cadence of the song, broke the surface of the water. A feeling of unreality presently crept over me, and I somehow felt as if I had lost my identity. Shakespeare's description of Cleopatra in her barge came into my mind, and I began to imagine that my dug-out canoe "like a burnished throne, burn'd on the water"; that my seat on the bundle of bedding was on the poop of "beaten gold"; and the paddles, which were dipped to the singing of the boatmen, were silver oars, beating the water "to the tune of flutes." And there is little doubt that my own personal appearance "beggared all description."

After a very long day—counting the time by such mundane measures as hours—we at last came in sight of the Boma, and we very soon rounded the peninsular on which it stands, and entered the small sheltered bay, where, to my intense relief, I saw the steamer swinging at anchor.



# GERMAN EAST AFRICA

## CHAPTER XI

### BISMARCKBURG

Reception in foreign territory—The reason of the boat's delay—  
Elation at starting up Tanganyika—Nights made hideous by cock-  
roaches—The lake—The White Fathers

AT Bismarckburg I stepped, so to speak, on to another rung of the ladder which was to help me on my way to Cairo. I had taken leave of British territory for a time, and crossed over to the southernmost station of the German East African administration on Lake Tanganyika. I expected to be some months in the German colony, and if all went well, I hoped when, next I came in touch with our own Empire, to be on the shores of Victoria Nyanza.

Bismarckburg is a well laid-out settlement, with tree ferns planted on either side of the pathways, which will afford a grateful shade when they are more fully grown. The Boma is a fine two-storied building set high on a promontory jutting out into the lake, and owing to its position, it could, if

necessary, be easily converted into a strong fort. It is large enough to accommodate four or five German officers and non-commissioned officers.

The village lies scattered round the small bay under the shelter and protection of encircling mountains, and as at Kitutu and Niamkolo the heat is often very oppressive.

On my arrival I put up at the rest-house, and the following day called at the Boma, where I saw the doctor. He told me that the boat was not leaving so soon as expected, and it would probably be towards the end of the week before she was ready to start. Knowing my lack of culinary utensils, and remembering that even my kettle was borrowed, I wondered how I should manage to exist so long, when to my relief, he suggested that I should take up my quarters at the Boma. The Commandant being away, his rooms could be placed at my service.

I gladly accepted this kind invitation, and said I would go ~~up the~~ next morning, when I was made very welcome by the two officers in residence—the doctor and the paymaster.

The residential portion of the building is on the first floor, and my two rooms were delightfully situated in one corner, with windows facing in three directions, which assured me of any little breeze there might happen to be.

The ground floor is occupied by the public offices. The space in front of the building, reaching to the end of the promontory, is laid out as a garden.



At the point is an harbour, and it gave one quite a cool sensation to sit there and listen to the water lapping on the stones beneath.

At the back, on one side of the square, is the prison, and opposite are the servants' quarters, the whole being enclosed by high walls. The gates are shut at night, and guarded by a sentry.

Soon after I arrived one of the officers came to my room to announce lunch, and on entering the dining-room I found that the table had been most artistically decorated in my honour. On the white cloth a graceful pattern had been traced with the petals of a lavender flower, and at the place allotted to me, my initials "M. H." were outlined in the same charming manner. Everything so daintily arranged made it very difficult to believe that there was no lady in the place and that it had all been done by these German officers. It was certainly a delicate attention which I fully appreciated.

Besides the two Government officials, the engineer of the boat was present, and also a gentleman who was to be my fellow-passenger up the lake. They were all most kind, and very successful in making me feel at home.

During lunch I learned the reason why the boat had been so long on its way from Udjidji. It appeared that the Government official, on whose account it was coming down, had met with an accident, and had sustained a severe injury to his hand. They knew the doctor was pursuing

scientific investigations somewhere inland from the lake, so they anchored at various places on the way, and sent runners in all directions to find him, which they unfortunately did not succeed in doing until they were within a day's journey of Bismarckburg, whither they all came together. I learnt subsequently that the operation, which the injured man had to undergo for the amputation of one of his fingers, proved quite successful.

The days passed rapidly, occupied for the most part by writing letters, and trying to keep cool. On Friday I was cheered by seeing the little steamer pass the Boma on a trial trip, preparatory to starting up the lake the following day. The trial proving successful, my ticket was issued, and the heavy luggage put on board; and at last it looked as if I were really to achieve my desire to reach the north end of Tanganyika, which at one time had seemed highly improbable.

Early the next morning the prisoners fetched the remainder of my baggage, and a little later I sauntered down towards the small landing-stage, where I was soon joined by my kind hosts, who accompanied me to the steamer.

After saying farewell we steamed away, and I cannot describe my feeling of elation as I realised that at last, after much anxiety and uncertainty, I was actually on my way northward. Had not this chance occurred, all my hopes would have been frustrated and I should have been obliged to retrace my steps by the way I had come.

It was owing to the energy of a German officer who foresaw the necessity of the Government having a boat on the lake, that a good many years ago the smart-looking little steamer, the *Hedwig von Wissman*, was launched on this inland sea. Unfortunately the natives, from superstitious fear, or for some unknown reason, had a great antipathy to the boat, and soon after its arrival set it on fire, and for all practical purposes destroyed it. The energetic officer, nothing daunted, returned to Germany, and pleaded his cause so eloquently, that his fellow-countrymen subscribed enough money to cover the expense of replacing the injured parts, and since then the little steamer has fulfilled its avocation unmolested.

At the present time it has only two small cabins—one for the captain and the other for the engineer. Originally there were others that have lately been absorbed by the boat. Travellers in that region are so rare that cabins are not considered necessary; and when they do happen to have passengers, the boat is anchored each evening, in order that they may camp on shore, returning to the boat at dawn.

I was glad that they did not expect me to adhere to this arrangement, as, having only my personal boys with me, I should have felt insufficiently protected; besides, I should always have been worried by the fear that the camp would not be struck early enough in the morning. As it

was, I had the satisfaction of knowing that the boat could not go without me ; but I had to pay dearly for this assurance, as it meant my sleeping every night in the company of innumerable giant cockroaches, which were for ever on the warpath during the hours of darkness.

At night my boys took out the table from the tiny saloon and replaced it with my bed, which fitted in so tightly that there was barely room for me to stand and remove my day attire ; while all the time I watched in trepidation the perambulations of the black—or, rather, light-brown—monsters, which doubtless appeared greatly magnified to my terror-stricken eyes. They were scampering all over the cabin, but fortunately I was able to fix my mosquito net over the bed, and once under its shelter, felt comparatively safe. I was always thankful for the first streak of daylight, and called my boys as soon as possible to remove the bed and bring in my bath. Until the table was brought back, I knew it was entirely blocking up the narrow gangway outside, making the one officer of the boat furious.

Above the saloon is the upper deck, which extends across the width of the boat. From this eminence I enjoyed for many a day the always delightful, and very often sublime, scenery of this wonderful lake.

Roughly speaking, Tanganyika is about the length of England, and I believe, the longest lake at that elevation in the world. Situated nearly

3,000 feet above the sea-level, it has 1,000 miles of coast-line and a surface of over 13,000 square miles. In a country of such vast proportions it might be described as narrow, although in its widest part it is over 50 miles from shore to shore.

The whole of the eastern side is German territory ; and the western, with the exception of a few miles in the south-west corner, which we claim, belongs to the Congo State. As the lake was discovered by Burton and Speke, and first navigated by Livingstone and Stanley, it is strange that we, with our reputed 'land-grabbing propensities, only possess the few miles I have mentioned.

The White Fathers, emanating from Algiers, occupy stations on either side of the lake. Kala, their southernmost station on the east side, only a few hours from Bismarckburg, was our destination the first day. I waited until the sun was near the horizon before I ventured ashore. The Mission gardens, which are close to the landing-place, contain fruit and vegetables of all descriptions growing in great profusion, and one of the Fathers gathered a goodly supply to send us as a present to the steamer. The paths were lined with gorgeous rose and geranium bushes, and I carried off quite a fragrant nosegay of English flowers.

There are several Sisters stationed at Kala, but just at that time they were all (but one) attending a function further up the lake. The one in residence did the honours of the place, and showed me

their house and small farmyard, in which were a few turkeys, rabbits, and so forth.

The hospitable Sister would not hear of my going away without first offering me some light refreshment; for although these missionaries live extremely simple and abstemious lives, the visit of a stranger is always made quite an occasion, which they usually mark by opening a bottle of their best Algerian wine.

They have built a pretty little church, and outside were some flowers waiting to be placed on the altar for Mass, the next day being Sunday. There was a sadness, I noticed, pervading both the Father and the Sister, and I learnt that during the previous week one of their co-workers had been taken from them, after an illness of only two days.

I cannot say that I had much sleep the first night on the boat. This was chiefly due to my strange surroundings and the excessive heat of the cabin, as some over- officious person outside had closed the shutters.

At dawn the men were up, and I soon followed, though feeling wofully sleepy. However, some hot coffee kept me going until breakfast-time, and after that I ensconced myself in my deck-chair in a quiet corner and dozed away the morning.

Kala was left behind at daybreak, and we reached Kirando, our next halting-place, towards mid-day. The station is on a hill a little removed from the landing-stage, and I walked to it through





MISSION AT KAREMA



GIVING MEDICINE TO SLEEPING SICKNESS PATIENTS



a straggling street with queer-looking native huts on either side. The inhabitants, I was afterwards told were all liberated slaves.

The Sisters of this station were also away, so I was left to the courtesy of the Fathers. The utter self-abnegation and devotion of this order to their work is very wonderful ; the Father Superior there had been in the country twenty-five years, and had only once been home, eleven years before. He expressed himself as quite happy, and ready to end his days among his adopted people. He told me that during his long sojourn in the country I was only the fourth white woman who had visited them.

He showed me over the church, of which he is justly proud. The Mission is even more prettily situated than the one at Kala, and I believe it is considered the most picturesque of all their stations. It overlooks a bay dotted with small islands, and though I did not see the hills to advantage, as they were covered with charred grass, the view was enchanting, and must certainly be most beautiful when the surroundings are clothed with verdure.

The next day we anchored at Karema, but the roughness of the lake prevented my landing, which I particularly regretted, as it is the chief station on that side. It was here, too, that all the Sisters were assembled, and I had been looking forward to seeing some womenkind again.

As a general rule the boat's course zigzags from the German to the Congo side, but this being a special trip she kept entirely to the eastern shore,

so I had no opportunity of calling either at the Government or Mission stations on the Belgian side, which I much regretted.

On the fourth day we lost sight of the other side of the lake for the first time; until then we had always been able to at least trace the outlines of the mountain ranges in the distant mist.

Although we did not get any, fish is very plentiful in the lake, whose waters have been sounded to a depth of 300 fathoms or more. Terrific storms sweep over its surface at times, caused by the sudden wild rush of wind down the narrow gulleys between the mountains which form such a picturesque setting to the lake. These tempests arise without the slightest warning, and transform the waters in a few hours, from smiling though treacherous complacency, to a scene of wild fury.

Edith Bay is credited with more of these storms than any other place on the lake, so I was agreeably surprised to find it calmer than our previous day's anchorage at Karema, more especially as we were to be stationary there all day. The engineer and the one other passenger went off on a shooting expedition, and I was the only European left on board. I wondered what I should do if anything unforeseen occurred in their absence, but except that the crew and native passengers, acting on the principle that "when the cat's away, the mice may play," became rather uproarious, everything remained satisfactory. Any one ignorant of the natives and their ways can hardly imagine how

clamorous they become when left to their own devices, and after a time I had to show them that it was quite possible for me to turn into the "cat"—at any rate temporarily. A few angry gestures subdued them sufficiently to enable me to 'read and write in a certain amount of peace and quietness.

Towards evening I gave myself up to the *dolce far niente*, and sat lazily in my deck-chair, drinking in the beauties of the surrounding scene. The calmness of the lake, the high and well-wooded mountains round the bay, with the sunset and evening light playing upon them; and the strip of sandy beach, with occasionally the ugly head of a mighty "hippo" pushed up through the intervening water, made a picture worthy of the "line" in the mental gallery. As I gazed upon this scene, I could in imagination hear gently murmured across the waters, "Come unto these yellow sands," and should certainly have accepted the invitation with alacrity if I had had a companion.

I was roused from my reverie by the return of the sportsmen, "weary and worn and sad," having been lured for many miles by indications of game without any success in finding it, until they were at last obliged to retrace their steps, having had no sport, and minus the wherewithal to replenish the larder.

As we neared the northern end of the lake the scenery increased in beauty, until it reached its zenith at Mount Kungue, near Tongue Bay.

Between Edith Bay and Udjidji the coast-line is broken by glorious ranges of mountains stretching away inland at right angles to the shores of the lake, and thickly wooded to the water's edge. Between these ranges are the narrow gulleys already mentioned, down which the wind rushes, lashing the waters to sudden turbulence.

We made good progress the next day, and just before sundown steamed into the bay at Kaisuni, so that it seemed likely that we should reach Udjidji early on the sixth day from Bismarckburg. The journey does not always take so long, but as there was only one officer in charge of the boat instead of two, the daily runs had been somewhat shortened.

## CHAPTER XII

### UDJIDJI

Anxiety to reach Boma—Native rising makes my advance uncertain—Surrounded by crowds from the market—Fresh tribes more terrifying—Bloodthirsty-looking porters—Dinner-party at the Boma—Reflections—More provisions—Udjidji the native's Paris—Pick-a-back to the boat—A knock-down blow

AS we approached Udjidji we could see the long, sloping shore leading up to a hill on the left, where the village, consisting of some hundreds of huts, was situated. On a higher hill to the right the Boma could be easily distinguished by the flag of the Fatherland fluttering in the breeze.

Since I had been in German territory my mind had been considerably perturbed by the various accounts I had heard of the native rising in the south, as it had apparently assumed rather alarming proportions, and there was just the possibility that the Government would not sanction my journey to Victoria Nyanza.

Before leaving England I had written to H.M. Commissioner of the Uganda Protectorate telling

him of my projected trip, and asking him to use his influence with the German officials to facilitate my journey through German East Africa, and I felt that if he had done this I should not be detained unnecessarily. Naturally I had no wish to proceed in the teeth of certain danger, and I was so anxious to know my fate that I felt, if I died in the attempt, I must at once climb to the Boma to learn what I could as to my chances of getting on. So up I plodded, ankle-deep in sand, under the blaze of the mid-day equatorial sun, getting hotter and hotter at every step, until I must have presented a sorry spectacle to the natives, who waited along the road with persistent curiosity, to get a peep at me.

What I must have looked like to the spotlessly white-clad Commandant who advanced to meet me on my arrival I know not, but I must say he concealed his thoughts admirably, and in a few minutes made me feel as if I had never been hot in my life, or, at all events, if I were by chance a trifle overheated, that it was quite unnoticeable.

After a little conversation I found that a communication on my behalf had reached him from Uganda, and that he was willing to do all in his power to help me. However, it was not all to be plain sailing just yet. He told me that the route from Udjidji lay through Tabora, a large native centre, which was likely to be in a state of unrest. Therefore it would be better for me to go on further north to Usumbora at the top of the lake. He thought it might be possible for the Com-

mandant there to give me a permit to strike across country to Bukoba by a route further from the disaffected part. And with this amount of comfort I had to be content.

He walked down with me to the offices, where I had been allotted a room for the two or three days I should have to wait until the boat was ready to go on again. As we passed the market, which is always crowded at that hour of the day, one or two of the people caught sight of me and spread the news like wildfire. Immediately there was a general stampede, hundreds pushing and shoving one another to get a nearer view of the wonderful phenomenon. I am certainly not nervous, but to be rushed at by such a number was, to say the least of it, rather embarrassing, especially when they were so excited and inquisitive.

My experience was that each fresh tribe or set of people I encountered presented a more terrifying aspect than the last, until I got accustomed to their various forms of savagery, expressed chiefly by ornaments, spears, and strange weapons.

It was at Udjidji that Livingstone was met by Stanley. The hut he occupied at the time has fallen to pieces, but the mango tree they planted to commemorate the meeting still flourishes to mark the historic spot.

Before their arrival, Udjidji was a stronghold of the slave-trade and of cattle-lifting raiders. There still remain a very large number of Arabs who carry on most of the legitimate trade of the port.

They always retain a feeling of suspicion and animosity against the ruling power, and are ever a thorn in the side of the Government.

I found I could complete my equipment and provide myself with stores here, so I set to work to get the necessary things together, and felt more satisfied and independent when I had done so.

There are some large and important salt works in the neighbourhood, and as the salt is very good and much appreciated, I took a large quantity of it with me as a medium with which to pay my men.

The Commandant, who thought it advisable I should engage my porters here rather than wait until I got to Usumbora, said he would have them looked up for me. The same afternoon the askari brought round, and marshalled before me, the most bloodthirsty looking set of reprobates imaginable, accompanied by a note from the Commandant, saying that these men did not wish to go to Victoria Nyanza except *via* Tabora, but that he would force them to go my way if I wished it.

I soon made up my mind that, as I wished to live to tell the story, I would much rather he forced them in any other direction than mine. So I sent back a note, saying that "I was extremely obliged, but that if it came to force I would rather wait until I got to Usumbora to exert it."

On my return from shopping the first afternoon I found an invitation to dine at the Boma the following day. I was told at Bismarckburg that when I left there I quitted civilisation, but I was inclined to







THE BOMA. UDJIDJI



A DHOW ON TANGANYIKA

think this was a mistake when I opened the formal invitation, on crested paper, to a dinner party.

The next evening, about seven, I and two gentlemen started for the Boma. When one of them ran back to fetch a very heavy stick, I remarked, "Surely you will not want that!" "Oh," he replied, "you never know what may happen in this country." As I was aware there was a very strained feeling, not only with the natives, but with the Arabs, I was glad it was not far to the Boma. As we drew near it in the darkness we could see the gallant little Commandant, surrounded by "boys" with lanterns, coming to the gate to welcome us.

The Boma, which scarcely supplies accommodation for the present staff, consists of a few detached buildings enclosed by a palisade. The Germans certainly excel in housekeeping, and here they get plenty of practice, for each officer takes it in turn to superintend the *ménage*, and I believe that night the arrangements were in the hands of the paymaster.

The party consisted of seven men and myself, and after ceremonious introductions, we began with a *hors d'œuvre*, followed by soup, several courses of meat, sweets, and native fruits. Coffee was the signal for a general move to another room, where there was a table set out with liquid refreshments in the true Fatherland style. Among the appointments were some splendid old German beer-glasses, and I wondered how such vessels could have been

transported so far in safety, for it was six weeks' march thence to the coast. It was a very great treat to see anything so delicately beautiful after weeks of nothing but metal cups and mugs.

The men "fell to" at the beer and cigars so lavishly provided for them; beer at 2s. 8d. per bottle, drunk like water, is no small item at a feast. The evening passed off with great *éclat*, and I felt that many thanks were due to our kind host.

On leaving, the Commandant insisted on walking back with me. He, with one or two of the guests, and their personal "boys," all carrying lanterns, made up a large enough party to dispel any fear. I felt rather nervous, however, after they returned, leaving me alone in the house for a short time, and I was very glad that I had my little dog "Maffi" as a companion and protector.

After reflecting on the events of the day, I tried to imagine the Udjidji of some forty years ago. I pictured myself arriving at a low, thatched hut, and sitting down to chat with its lonely occupant, an elderly man, a little above the average height, whose brown hair was streaked with grey about the temples, although his hazel eyes retained all the brightness and keenness of youth. His mouth was firm with unconquerable faith and strong resolution to persevere until the end, in the field which he had chosen for his labours. In fancy I gleaned from the great missionary some of his hopes and aspirations for the future of the place; and as I mused

upon them, my thoughts again bridged the gulf of years and meditating on what I had seen of Udjidji during the few days I had been there, I thought I could gauge, to some extent, how far his ideals had been realised.

The two days I spent at Udjidji passed pleasantly enough. My hope of getting on had not been entirely crushed, and I had also supplied myself with tinned atrocities enough—if they did not lay me low—to last for months, and so provide for the possibility of long delays through illness or other causes. I had been told that unless I took sufficient food to meet all emergencies, I might be left a skeleton on the wastes between Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza.

I supplemented my personal staff by a so-called cook, who had previously been only a cook's boy (washer-up), but as there was no choice I was obliged to take him. The only boys who can really cook, are those who have been taught by the few white men who have been in the district, and these are naturally kept in the service of those who have taken the trouble to train them.\*

To the native, Udjidji is a centre of gaiety, and Mike and John had a very rollicking time. At the market they bought several new garments, including a bright blue waistcoat—which they wore in turns—and a flaring red handkerchief, to bind turban fashion on the head, or fasten round the waist, as fancy prompted.

On the morning that I left for Usumbora, cook

and John were nowhere to be found when I was ready to start for the steamer. This caused great consternation, and scouts were sent out in all directions to search for them, while I hurried down to the shore. I was the more anxious about their non-appearance, as I had been told that the captain—who had now sufficiently recovered from his attack of blackwater fever to resume his duties—like time and tide, waited for no man.

The small boat, which was to take me to the steamer, lay a long way out in shallow water, and before I realised what they were about, some boatmen had caught me up in their arms in a most casual manner, and attempted to carry me to it; but we had not gone many yards before I felt that they were losing their balance, so by much gesticulating I made them understand that I wished them to go back and start afresh. I then insisted upon one man carrying me pick-a-back—a safer if less elegant mode of procedure. Providentially, the white officials were busy elsewhere, and the crowd of darkies on the beach did not seem to perceive the humour of the situation.

From the steamer I could descry the two missing boys, followed by an excited mob, making their way as quickly as possible to the shore, and I devoutly hoped a boat would be available to bring them out. It was a considerable relief to me to see they were anxious to come, and had not intended to play me false.

We left Udjidji with four white people on board

—the doctor, who was returning to Usumbora, myself, and the two officers of the boat.

The first day we had an uninterrupted run of nine hours, the mountains on either side distinct and beautiful all the time. Just as we were about to anchor for the night, I noticed what I took to be a small landing-stage, but as we got nearer I discovered it was the back of a huge "hippo," who, aroused from his slumbers by the approach of the steamer, gave a mighty snort, and diving under the water was seen no more.

There is very little life on the lake as a whole, and all the variety one gets is owing to the atmospheric effects, which are never alike many hours together. Once we overtook the large dug-out Mission boat, going lazily along with its freight of "Sisters," and once or twice in the distance we saw the tiny canoe of a native.

A few hours before we got to Usumbora we could see, high up on the hillside, yet another station of the White Fathers nestling among the trees.

The next day we approached the top of the lake, where the mountains, from that distance, seemed to rise from the water's edge, but a nearer view showed that it was many miles before they closed in, embracing a fertile valley. There is little doubt that centuries ago the lake kept true to the mountains, and followed them closely, splashing its waters at their base.

I cannot express the satisfaction I felt on arriving

at the head of the lake, which had proved such a stumbling-block to the progress of more than one intrepid traveller who wished to get through to the north.

On our arrival at Usumbora the doctor was the first to quit the boat, and when I saw him with the paymaster awaiting me on the shore, I fervently hoped it would not be necessary for me to effect a landing pick-a-back. I decided I would rather wade knee-deep than suffer that indignity; however, a good long jump landed me on dry sand.

After the usual greetings had been exchanged I received a regular "knock-down" blow. The doctor had evidently explained my desire to cross the plateau to Uganda, and the paymaster informed me at once, that he had no permit for me to go through, and could not grant me one in the absence of the Commandant.

After my elation at having got so far this was terrible news, and I could hardly summon up enough courage to ask his advice as to what I had better do now. When I did at last in trepidation consult him, he said I must wait while he sent out an askari to the Commandant, who was away visiting the various chiefs of the district.

I was wofully disappointed at the turn things had taken, as I had been relying, to a great extent, on what personal persuasion might do, if any opposition should be offered to my projected journey. Now, the matter was to be left to uncompromising black and white, with no appeal



against an adverse answer under many weeks. The officer sympathised with me, and said that perhaps it would not be many days before the messenger returned with a satisfactory answer, and that in the meantime he could place a room in the Boma at my disposal. So I tried not to be downcast, but to hope for the best.

We had a long, heavy, sandy, uphill walk to the Boma, but once there everything was as delightful as one could wish, and much more so than one would expect. Hot and tired as we were when we reached the end of our climb, the shelter of a roof was most acceptable, to say nothing of the deliciousness of a cool drink, which we enjoyed while a musical box discoursed sweet music, one of its efforts being the British National Anthem.

No time was lost in despatching the man for the permit. One of the best runners was chosen, and within two hours was on his way with strict injunctions to find the Commandant, and return as quickly as possible. After that I had to possess my soul in patience, and wait for farther developments.

## CHAPTER XIII

### USUMBORA

The Boma buildings—Home-made whitewash—My quarters—  
The coinage—The market—Beautiful cattle—The lake shore—Men  
volunteer to form caravan—Messenger returns—Good news

USUMBORA is the most northerly administrative station on Lake Tanganyika. A wide, sandy road leads from the shore to the station. On both sides of this, at the end near the lake, are shops kept either by Arabs or Indians, who have drifted to this place, chiefly from Zanzibar. At the upper end, near the Boma, are situated two vegetable gardens belonging to the Government, one for the Commandant's mess and the other for the non-commissioned officers'. At these German posts they always have one or two of the latter rank; it seems an excellent plan, and from what I could see, works well.

From the gardens there is a short, steep incline, which leads at once to the higher level where they have wisely placed the small detached residences of the staff. These houses, though

small, are substantial, and, with the prison, are enclosed by a well-built wall. Beyond, in one direction, is the doctor's house and the hospital, and on the other side the kitchens and mess-room. The latter is a large building with one entire side opening to the lake, and a small reading-room at one end. Immediately in front of this is an open space intersected by a wide road running parallel to the building, and on the slopes beyond is a banana grove, over which one obtains a splendid view of the lake, with the mountains of the Congo side for a background. The width of the lake at this end is 18 or 19 miles, and just before rain the houses on the opposite side can be seen quite distinctly.

All the buildings and surrounding walls are intensely white, and I could not help remarking on the extravagance in whitewash, and wondering how the supply was kept up. I was told that it was made on the spot from shells similar to the mussel, which are gathered in great quantities from the lake shore, and then baked in native kilns until reduced to white powder.

In the rear of the Boma is a long avenue of short, thick oil palms; the other roads are planted on both sides, either with palms, or lemon and mango trees. Walking from my quarters to the mess-room, I passed under trees laden with fruit, lemons, and large mangoes hanging by their long stems in hundreds. Sad to say, the latter were not yet ripe, but probably if they had been, I should not

have been able to resist them, and they might have proved my undoing.

Usumbora is one of the prettiest and best laid-out stations which I have seen. There are a great many native soldiers there, and it was interesting to watch them going through their drill. Pitching and striking camp was a most exciting exercise, and I wished my men could display only a tenth part of their dexterity. The colours were saluted at sunrise and sunset, bugles were heard at frequent intervals during the day, and a military atmosphere pervaded the whole place. It was all so new to my boys that they never seemed to tire of watching the parades.

The prisoners, chained together by the neck in batches of twelve, distributed water to the different quarters connected with the Boma, and this they had to fetch from the lake, a distance of about a mile.

My own little shanty was very cosy; I had a fair-sized bedroom, which, to my joy, was free from all crawling things, and just in front was a covered space where I could sit during the day; but I was fully occupied in getting everything ready for a long and perhaps tedious journey.

I set the boys to work to mend the machila and overhaul the tent; and of course the household and personal washing had to be done.

I had a great hunt round the villages for a basket strong and big enough to hold my kitchen utensils. When I found one suitable to my purpose, I



OIL PALM AVENUE



MY QUARTERS



NATIVES STARTING FOR UDJIDJI



inquired the price, and the man who owned it replied in the prevailing lingo, that it was half a rupee (equal to eightpence). At this the crowd, which always gathers when there is any bartering going on, burst into roars of laughter at the fabulous sum demanded; and after a time the man himself could not help smiling also. I thought that an offer of fourpence on my part would not be too reckless, and in a second the basket was mine, and the late owner, for the moment, a rich man? I certainly had my money's worth, as the basket lasted me the whole way to Gondokoro.

Any spare time I had was devoted to developing my exposed plates in the dark-room which had been placed at my disposal, also to letter-writing, for I knew it might be weeks, and possibly months, before I could be in touch with any kind of postal service again.

I was not troubled about meals, as the two officials generously made me a guest at their mess, so that I was left in happy ignorance of the utter incapacity of my new cook.

On leaving British territory I had been a little timorous as to the reception which might be accorded me under a foreign flag, but I gladly take this opportunity, to register my grateful thanks to all the German officers with whom I came in contact. One and all, they not only showered hospitality upon me but displayed the kindest consideration, devoting much time and forethought to my comfort and safety. On various occasions

their genial companionship whiled away what would otherwise have been a very tedious time. Without their thorough co-operation, I could never have attempted the task which I eventually accomplished, and my confidence in their invaluable aid gave me courage to persevere in the journey I had planned out.

There is a very large daily market at Usumbora, and the avenue leading directly to it, past the rear of the Boma, is thronged the whole morning by natives carrying in whatever they have to sell, in the way of grain, beans, fruit, oil, pottery, tobacco and fish, and by others coming away with their purchases. Judging by what they took home, I should say they were all rather well-to-do. Every woman had a bowl of silvery little fish like white-bait, which swarm in the lake, and often a good-sized piece of meat, besides little delicacies in the way of beans, fruit, and perhaps a few cigarettes.

The coinage consists principally of beads, which the women wear round their necks. I noticed one woman, whose body was almost covered by row upon row of the particular red bead which they affect. She was certainly a multi-millionaire, and made no secret of it.

The clatter in the market was deafening, but when I first made my appearance there, a solemn silence fell upon the people for a few seconds, until, recovering from their surprise, they flocked round me like a lot of chattering monkeys. They did not seem to have any fear of me unless I singled out



one, and perhaps put out my hand to point at her beads or other ornaments, when she would slink away and retire to the back of the crowd.

I was not much surprised at their curiosity, as the only European woman they had ever seen before, was a white Sister in her Mission garb.

Here the type of people and their ornaments differed widely from the tribes I had seen recently. The women as well as the men are exceptionally tall, thin, and upright, the height of the men being accentuated by the long spears they carry. Round their loins the women wear masses of fine wicker cords, held together by a broad band of beads at the back. Their anklets are made either in the same way or else of brass and copper, worn in such numbers that walking is almost impossible, and gives them all the appearance of suffering from elephantiasis.

These people belong to the Walundi tribe, and are exceedingly warlike in appearance; in fact, I did not dare to look forward and think of myself, miles away from any kind of civilisation, the only European among about forty of these fierce-looking men, although I knew that such was the situation I would have to face, if I were ever to accomplish what I had set out to do. But I put the thought resolutely from my mind for the present, with the reflection that it was of no use to meet troubles half-way.

The market, lying in the flat plain with its beautiful environment of lake and mountains, its ever-moving, noisy crowd of weird people with weird

ornaments and still more weird manners, brightened by a scorching African sun, always fascinated me, and I visited it almost daily. The colour of the calico used here is a beautiful tint of scarlet lake, which was a pleasing change from the monotonous blue and white of the south. I never tired of watching the people passing along the palm avenue, patches of this brilliant colour ever and anon catching the eye and making a strong contrast against the green foliage of the trees.

\* Several times I tried to get some snap-shots in the market, but whenever the people caught sight of my camera, I was so hemmed in by a crowd of eager "posers" that I could do nothing. Every now and then, with the pretended aid of a stick, which I flourished threateningly, I cleared a little opening and essayed to take a photograph. I was particularly anxious to get a picture of one sweet little boy, as he stood with a bunch of bananas almost as big as himself poised upon his head. After I had succeeded in taking him, I was weak enough to give him a coin equal to, about a farthing, which caused quite a commotion among the people; they apparently felt much hurt that I had not given them all the same. I made Mike translate to them quite seriously, that I thought as they had been so anxious to be photographed *they* ought to pay *me*. That amused them exceedingly, and the cloud of discontent vanished away.

One day I inspected a remarkable herd of

animals in the cattle kraal ; their horns were fearful and wonderful, some measuring 20 feet from tip to tip. The breed, which was imported some years ago, has been a great success.

Another morning I strolled down to the lake, stopping now and again to have a chat with the people, Mike being with me to interpret. The first woman I spoke to was making ear ornaments ; she had moistened some strips of coloured paper, and was rolling each strip tightly round and round until it formed a solid mass, the shape and size of the wooden ones already described, and worn further south. Here, in addition to the one worn in the lobe, the women have two smaller ones placed round the ear. The fashion, which is quite a pretty one, was brought from the coast. I remember the majority of the women in Daressalam followed it, and there I once saw an ear without its ornament. It was a horrible and ghastly sight ; no semblance of an ear remained, nothing but loose strips of pendant, mutilated flesh.

I walked a little further on, and presently came across an interesting group of women squatting outside their huts doing each other's hair. They were polite enough to offer me a broken-down deck-chair—the best they had—in which I sat and watched the operation. It was certainly a work of art, and required much time and patience. The hair was divided, and braided tightly against the head in minute plaits running from the crown to the

neck like furrows in a ploughed field. These native women are generally open to a little joke, and when I made signs that I would like to have mine done in the same way they were very much amused.

After this I moved on without further pause to the lake, and its beauty at close quarters more than repaid me for the toil of getting there. The path I had been following was bordered on either side by grasses higher than my head, and on turning a bend in it, I suddenly came upon a series of living pictures.

Before me was the azure lake, the near water broken here and there by immense clumps of giant grass swaying in the gentle breeze; on the sand close by, knelt a devout Mohammedan praying with his face towards Mecca, and the occasional movement of his body as he inclined himself every now and then, so that his head might touch the ground, seemed to harmonise with the poetic surroundings.<sup>9</sup>

Mike was the central figure of another picture with the same background. Knee-deep in the water, he was giving Maffi his matutinal bath, and his bright blue waistcoat and red handkerchief made a striking contrast with the green grass behind him.

A few paces round a curve of the shore, was a party of natives just about to start in a large "dug-out" for Udjidji. The boat, crammed with various bundles tied up in gaudy-coloured garments, and its gaily-clad occupants, were all

mirrored in the sun-lit waters. They expected to be four days *en route*, and I did not envy them the journey in such a small craft, especially on a lake that can be as tempestuous as the sea.

By this time the heat made it necessary to beat a retreat. The only way to keep cool, I found, was to remain under shelter from about 9 a.m. until 4 or 5 in the afternoon.

I had been told that it was quite impossible to get an answer to our message to the Commandant before Thursday, but from that day onwards I was on thorns, and devoured with impatience to know my fate. Then news was brought by an incoming native that the askari had overstepped the mark, and gone beyond the Commandant's camp, which would prolong my suspense for some days.

In the meantime the doctor was indefatigable in his endeavours to make up my caravan of *volunteers only*, for I had made quite clear to him my horror of engaging pressed men. He therefore caused the news to be circulated that I wished to form a caravan to go to Victoria Nyanza, and every evening he reported to me how many men had come in during the day to offer their services. There were always three or four, and sometimes more, so that I began to feel quite easy on that score.

At last, after a week's absence, the messenger returned, and I was overjoyed to hear that I might really go forward. The Commandant's reply con-

tained fully detailed instructions for my guidance. He had carefully thought out the safest route, and directed me to keep as far north as possible. I was to cross the plateau to Bukoba, the most northerly German station on the west of Lake Victoria Nyanza. He further gave orders that two native soldiers were to accompany me as escort, until I reached the Bukoba boundary and quitted the Usumbora district, a journey which would take about three weeks.

I was delighted to fall in with this itinerary, as it led through untrodden ways, which appealed to me much more than the beaten caravan track to Mwanza on the south of the lake.

Now that the permit had arrived I was all agog to be off, and hastened to complete my preparations. The doctor took me at once to the paymaster to arrange the all-important monetary matters. I was requested to lodge a cheque for £20 with the Government, which represented so many rupees per head for the porters, as surety for my proper treatment of them. This sum was to be refunded to me if I had not killed any before I arrived at my destination! There was a touch of humour about this arrangement which rather took my fancy. There was I, one poor, unprotected woman, without firearms of any description, starting on a long journey through wild tracts of country, with forty savage-looking blacks, who were armed with spears and other warlike implements, and whose numbers could be augmented by hundreds from any village

we passed ; and I was asked to give my assurance that I would do them no harm, while I knew all the time that I was really at their mercy, and was praying that they might neither murder nor forsake me.

When this rule was formulated the Government naturally did not foresee the possibility of a woman travelling that way alone ; but the precaution has been quite necessary in the case of some traders and others who have passed through, and shown scant regard for the lives of the natives, punishing the least offence with death.

I was to pay each man a rupee before starting, and the remainder of the specified sum for the trip when the journey was completed, and as I did not want to carry any money with me I paid this amount to the Government for transfer to Bukoba. In addition, every four days they were to receive "poso," or food allowance. I had nothing to pay the askari, but every three days I was to give them the same allowance for food as the other men received for four.

Then I visited the store and provided myself with the required quantity of the circulating currencies of the country which, in the territory I was about to pass through, consisted of beads, calico, and salt.

I was strongly advised not to take all the salt I had brought from Udjidji, as it would necessitate taking ten additional men to carry it, and being the season for the small rains, there was also

the risk of getting it spoilt. The merchant gladly substituted for it beads and calico, and I only retained about a dozen bundles of 15 lbs. each, which could easily be carried singly by the machila men.

On my way back to my quarters after this shopping expedition, I confided to the officers what terrible fears I had entertained all the week of not being allowed to go on, and they replied, "Well, we did not like to say so, but we thought your case was hopeless." And they sincerely congratulated me on my good fortune.

I cannot imagine what would have happened had I not been allowed to proceed, as the steamer had left and was not likely to return for some time. But there is no need to reflect on what might have been.

On the eve of my departure we sat late in the mess-room and talked over the future. We speculated on the adventures that might lie before me, and discussed the obstacles, in the shape of swampy rivers, &c., which would have to be overcome; and I expressed a fervent hope that my men would be amenable to discipline. Looking still further forward, we reminded each other that the world was really very small, and we might meet again in a more civilised region, when I would be able to tell them how I had surmounted all the difficulties.

More than once while I was in Central Africa I had reason to congratulate myself that



some years ago I spent several months in Germany, and remembered enough of the language to transact my business with the German officers, and make these pleasant social evenings possible.

Everything on this last night looked most lovely, and even now if I close my eyes, I can still see in imagination the grass fires burning brightly on the Belgian side, giving the effect at that distance of the promenade at Hastings or Brighton with the piers illuminated. With that association of ideas came the thought of the crowds of people one might count at either of these places, even in the empty season, compared with the six or seven Europeans—the most we could muster at Usumbora at its fullest.

The next morning the doctor sent me word that all the men had come and had been registered, and he saw no reason why I should not start without further delay.

I went at once to see them, and they all expressed a desire for a preliminary payment of two rupees instead of the one already promised. Had I been certain they would go all the way with me I would have given them the amount they asked, but, following the advice of those with more experience than myself, I gave them 1½ rupees, and an hour for shopping and farewells.

Generally on such occasions they buy a few things they are not likely to get on the way,

and leave the remainder of the money to provide for their wives and families during their absence.

While they were away my boys saw that all my baggage was ready, and the sergeant sorted it out in bundles, according to the weight of a man's load. When the porters returned they filed up in line, and sixteen good men—more or less the same height—having been chosen for the machila, the others picked up the loads. As I took a good look at them I felt very glad that I had not engaged the scowling set at Udjidji, for although these were a veritable company of spearmen the others had looked nothing less than cut-throats.

The eventful moment having arrived, I, of my own free will, cut myself adrift from the companionship and protection of white men, and wended my way whither a white woman had never set foot before. To one like myself, possessed of an adventurous spirit, it was a supreme moment, and Kingsley's words of triumph, "At last!" which were uppermost in my mind, expressed my feelings to a nicety.

Thus I started to traverse 300 to 400 miles of uncivilised country, made up of forests, plains, rivers, and lakes. My success or the reverse, depended largely on my men, combined, of course, with good health and exemption from fever, but, above all, the absence of any demonstration of hostile feeling on the part of the tribes through whose territory I had to pass.

In Central Africa it is the imminent probability of danger, rather than the actuality, that frightens one, but I was willing to risk the adverse possibilities, and felt that a world of interest and excitement lay before me.

## CHAPTER XIV

### USUMBORA TO KANYINYA

A fair start—Adieu to Tanganyika—The end of the road—  
Torrential rain—My men commandeer cattle—Natives who have  
never seen money—Six thousand feet above the sea—Porters settle  
to their work—Difficult rivers to cross

**M**Y caravan, numbering forty-two, got into line towards noon on October 9th. After some kindly words of encouragement and good wishes from the German officers, I was carried off in my machila, catching a last glimpse of my hospitable friends and hosts waving farewells from the little outlook at the angle of the Boma wall. The excitement of the start was enhanced by the thunder rumbling in the distance and the black clouds which looked ready to drench us at any moment.

The porters were followed for some distance by their relatives and friends, some of them, as a last little attention to their chums, carrying the machila and loads for a time, until I wondered whether, or not, the whole village was coming with me. But by degrees they dwindled away, and a certain amount of quiet ensued.

We made across country to the hills, which we began to ascend, and in about three hours pitched camp for the night. Round about my tent every four or five men built for themselves a charming little circular hut of interlaced grasses and reeds, thickly thatched with banana leaves. I expressed my regret to Mike that it was too late to take a photograph, but he told me that it was of no consequence as they would build similar huts every day. My other men had never put up any kind of shelter, but always lay in the open, round the fires.

Towards evening I strolled to a small hill close by, whence I obtained a perfect view of the lake beneath, and the valley left by its receding waters. It was a glorious view, and I turned from it regretfully, thinking it was the last I should see of Tanganyika, but in this I was mistaken, as the following day I got several beautiful vistas as we ascended the heights.

When I returned to camp I found the men were busy doing up my bundles of salt, to prevent them getting wet. They are very ingenious and handy when they like. They had cut the dry stem of a banana plant and split it open, placing the bundle in the centre; then they drew up the strips of thin bark round it, and tied the whole together with strong fibre. It was a most satisfactory covering, and would resist any moisture.

I went to bed fully imbued with the idea that I should wake in the morning to find most of the men had deserted. Maffi also seemed suspicious of

things in general, and neither of us slept very soundly. However, daylight revealed the full complement of porters, and I felt happier. The sun was overcast, but that kept the temperature cooler. These carriers had never seen a machila before, so were quite new to the work ; consequently they went very slowly, and instead of my being in advance of the loads, as I had always been across the Tanganyika Plateau, we all kept together. Later on, when we were doubtful as to the route, and might easily have gone astray if separated, it proved to be the best possible arrangement. One of the askari walked in front of the procession and one in the rear.

The road, as far as it reaches—about five or six hours' journey from the lake—is excellent, and broad enough for an army of soldiers to march along comfortably, eight or nine abreast. The Government contemplate constructing it to meet the road from Mwanza to Bukoba, but after having been across the country, I think the chances of it getting half-way even are very problematical.

We travelled uphill all day, looking down upon banana groves and well-tended gardens in the valleys beneath us. The produce of these gardens is taken to the noisy market at Usumbora. About nine o'clock we came to the end of the engineered road. Hundreds of natives were at work on it with quaint little short-handled hoes, breaking up the earth and collecting it in small baskets to be distributed where needed for levelling purposes. The



A PORTER'S HUT



A REST



ASKARI'S TENT





soil is of a bright red colour and forms a delightful contrast to the vivid green of the hills around.

While I was enjoying the prospect the porters had put down their loads, and most of them having found acquaintances among the road-makers, were telling them of the hopes and fears they entertained as to the hundred and one things which might happen before they met again, and of the wonders of the new calico and drapery they would bring back in triumph. I think the fact of their being members of a party to take a European woman so far, made them, in the eyes of their companions, men to be looked up to.

We continued our way along a very narrow track, which was very much more to my taste than the high-road we had just quitted. We had not gone far when the daily thunderstorm, which we had eluded the morning before, burst upon us, and in a moment we were in the midst of torrential rain. It was a funny, albeit mournful, sight to see the men, like drowned rats, literally drenched to the skin, which is about all they had on. I was fairly well protected in my machila, but rugs and pillows would not be kept within bounds, and soon became very wet. As at night they formed part of my bedding, I was filled with unpleasant anticipations of an uncomfortable night with a severe cold to follow.

The tent was already pitched when I arrived in camp, but everything was wet and uncomfortable, so we set to work and dried what we could at the

fires the men had made, and I luckily thought of my hot-water bottle, which was filled and used like a warming-pan to air my bed.

About midnight I awoke to find another heavy storm in progress, but I was then safely under cover, and hugging the clothes about me, soon fell asleep again.

After a storm everything is wet and more difficult to pack, and in consequence it was nearly seven next morning before we were on our way again. This was not so serious as it would have been a few days before: ever since we left Usumbora we had been steadily rising until we were now nearly on the top of the plateau, where the temperature was considerably lower, and there was not the same necessity to get to camp early, as even at mid-day it was not too hot.

I noticed as we went along that here and there were deep, round, grass-clad hollows, such as I had seen in the Canary Islands, and heard described as extinct volcanoes, but I could get no information from the natives as to what they were thought to be here.

Every caravan is under the supervision of a "capitao," or "nympala," and one morning I caught sight of my capitao driving along two young calves which I knew did not belong to me. This I felt required explanation, and I immediately called Mike to help me to investigate the matter. The men evaded my questions as much as possible, but at last had to confess that they had taken the

cattle in order to force the proprietor to give us a goat. This being quite contrary to my ideas of justice, I called a halt, and made the owner come to my side. He was in a frantic state of excitement, and it was pitiable to see him, rushing from one side of the machila to the other, clapping his hands to salute me, while all the time he kept an anxious eye on the rifle of the askari. My inability to speak the language increased the difficulty of the situation, and I tried my hardest by signs, to pacify and assure the poor fellow that he would be fairly treated. By his wild expression of despair and dumb show of running a knife across his neck, I understood that, even if I cut his head off, he had no goat to give me. Decapitation was far from my thoughts, especially as goat-flesh held no alluring charm for me. I explained that I had no wish for a goat, but suggested that if he had any milk or eggs, either would be acceptable, and an equivalent in salt should be given to him. At this he went away greatly relieved, taking his calves with him, and a few miles further on, I was told that he had overtaken us, bringing about three quarts of milk. I think my judgment in the case proved far more satisfactory to the man and myself than to the askari.

We were fortunately in camp that day before the rain commenced, but while I was writing in the afternoon, the wind blew a fearful gale and nearly overturned my tent, which caused a great scamper among the men to peg it down more securely. I

was most thankful it had not happened in the night, as they are then not easily aroused, and the consequences might have been serious.

The storms pass as suddenly as they come, and when this one had spent itself I walked to the village close by. It was enclosed by a stockade made of dried reeds and grasses, which met overhead at the entrance, forming an archway.

The women in general were a little afraid of me, for, never having seen a white woman before, they evidently felt that they were in the presence of a strange being, whose customs and habits might prove dangerous.

In this particular village they were less timid; one of them was very intelligent and amusing, and so quick at gesture that we carried on quite an animated conversation by its means.

I was not favourably impressed with the beauty of some of the hairdressing styles here. I noticed one little girl walking about with her hair done in a number of thin, hanging plaits, caked with oil, and looking just like so much mud. I learned afterwards that this unattractive fashion is a mark of distinction, and only the daughters of chiefs are allowed to adopt it.

After I had looked over the little huts, and before leaving, I gave each woman standing round a *hela*—about a halfpenny. Mike told me with a very superior air that they had no idea what it was, never having seen money before, and they were going to wear them as ornaments. However, the askari

soon enlightened them as to their value for barter, as later I saw them running about very happy, with some oily-looking fluid in the palms of their hands, which Mike said was "nose-oil," meaning a kind of snuff. The soldiers had given it to them in exchange for the *helas*.

By the fourth day we were well up on the plateau, 6,000 feet above the sea, and the view of the hills in all directions was glorious. Our course for some time lay along a high ridge, from which I overlooked a vast scene of undulating country, stretching away to the horizon. It was just as if the wild, rolling billows of the sea had been suddenly solidified and changed into mountains and valleys, over which we had to trace our tortuous way.

After a while we had to descend slightly, and the men wriggled my machila through a banana grove, where I got picturesque glimpses of the porters through the thinner parts of the foliage, wending their way onwards along the winding path. The banana plants grow to a great height, and it seemed like passing through a dense wood, with occasional rays of sunlight penetrating the branches, and making more vivid the bright emerald green of the leaves on which they glinted.

In this part of the country the chief of a district is designated a "Sultan," and, although perhaps not in strict accordance with *Burke*, the title is usually applied to the headman of the village.

At my next halting-place the Sultan was away, so I made my state call on the Sultana. I generally

found it more agreeable to my nasal organs to pay my respects in the open air, but sometimes the people considered they were honouring me more by receiving me inside their dwelling. It was so on this occasion, and I had to go down on all fours to make my way into the hut, through an opening 3 feet square, bumping my head and face against innumerable bits of carved wood and curious objects done up in grasses, hanging at the door as charms to keep away sickness and evil spirits. It could hardly be called a dignified entrance on my part, but all seemed pleased to see me.

The conversation might have been both intellectual and improving had the Tower of Babel never existed for our confusion ; as it was, our ideas were exchanged somewhat in this manner. My hostess said what she had to say to the askari, the askari translated it into Swahili to Mike who put it into English for me, so that our talk was neither fluent, rapid, nor reliable. I must confess that my attention flagged during the process, but it gave me time to notice a few of the characteristics of the people.

They are of a refined type ; very tall and slim, with dark brown oval faces, not at all like the typical broad-nosed, thick-lipped negro. If you divide Africa roughly into three parts, the middle section from east to west is peopled by the Bantu race, of which there are endless divisions and subdivisions, but they are all classified as Negroid.

The previous day I had noticed a man with his

face besmeared with yellow daubs of paint, but as a rule they are not disfigured in any way.

Later on that afternoon, when I was wandering round, I saw a particularly athletic-looking black talking to the porters, and when I asked who he was, Mike informed me in a solemn manner that he was the milkmaid (herdsman). Large herds of cattle were to be seen, and judging from the land under cultivation there must be a considerable population; but as soon as they got wind of a caravan, they fled in all directions, or concealed themselves. I must say I missed the friendly crowds rushing out to salute us as they did on the Tanganyika Plateau. Though they made a hideous din at the time with their shouting and screaming, they afforded me much amusement, and left behind memories of a wild but well-disposed people.

At the camping-grounds, however, the villagers always seemed to be on very good terms with the askari and porters, and offered me handsome presents. At first I did not accept all they brought, but I soon learned that I was expected to take everything, and divide what I did not want for myself among the carriers.

My men proved themselves a good set of fellows, and having settled down to the routine of "sofari," I now felt confident that none of them would desert.

The next day I had my first experience of their cleverness in overcoming the difficulties presented

by nature. We had to cross several rivers, which are very formidable obstacles, not as regards the actual streams, which are generally neither wide nor deep, but because they are bordered by half a mile or more of papyrus grass, 20 feet high, growing in a fearful quagmire, through which we had to make a passage.

On these occasions the baggage had to be put down and all hands requisitioned for the task of getting me across. They would set to work with a will to cut down the giant grass until they made sufficient space to force the machila through. I never thought it would stand the strain put upon it, and at times there were ominous creakings which were most alarming. The over-anxiety of the men very nearly caused my downfall several times; they had a habit of clutching the canvas body of the machila to help in lifting the weight, and if they did not happen to take hold of both sides simultaneously I was nearly tipped out. When we were safely across, and the first foothold firmly established, there would be a tremendous hulla-balloo and general rejoicing. The course of the rivers being through deep valleys, we nearly always had a steep hill to climb immediately after crossing, so before proceeding I generally gave the men time to recover after their extra exertions.

I was taken up the hills backwards, and in this way I got a good view of the river and grass we had just struggled through; looking at the expanse of swamp from above, it seemed an insuperable



barrier, and I felt very proud of my bearers for having done so well.

In past ages these must indeed have been mighty rivers, but are now so overgrown that there is only a comparatively narrow waterway coursing through the masses of papyrus.

As the crow flies, we did not progress much that day. The men had had a very trying time, so we camped early, and I think we were all glad of a rest. Our arrangements were made much more quickly now than when we started, as each man knew exactly what was expected of him, and where his load had to be placed. One or two would go at once for water, some would fetch wood, others built the kitchen, while the rest combined in creating the little mushroom village of green huts which always sprang up, as if by magic, in the vicinity of the tent.

## CHAPTER XV

### USUMBORA TO KANYINYA (*continued*)

Fresh meat—The first roll-call for "poso"—The superiority of the askari—An unhappy "pitch"—Forced guides—Result—Think my last day has come—Amicable settlement

THE first day that we killed fresh meat, Mike gave me to understand that I was expected to take what I wanted for my own use and apportion the remainder of the animal among the men. I found it cut up and placed neatly on banana leaves: all was there, even to the intestines, every atom of which the natives boil to flavour their cereal food. The skin is considered the perquisite of the man who kills the animal. It is always very carefully pegged out to dry, and then becomes part of the owner's wardrobe, or is perhaps converted into a bag to carry his flour.

Goat is not bad eating when well cooked, but atrocious otherwise; and as my *chef* did not excel in this branch of the culinary art, I contented myself with the liver and enough flesh to make a little soup. My personal boys and the askari were given a fair proportion, and the remainder was

divided between the six Uganda porters, they being the only ones who would eat either goat's flesh or mutton, the others only condescending to beef, which they never got until we reached Bukoba.

At most halting-places a large quantity of bananas was brought to me, and I always took care that the men who did not eat meat had the greater part of them.

At one place when the chief called upon me I asked if he could let me have any eggs or chickens, whereupon he stooped and hastily picked some grass, which he rolled excitedly in his hands, then threw it on the ground before me and rushed away. I thought I had given mortal offence, and wondered what I should do to propitiate him, when it was explained to me that his action simply signified that all he had was placed at my feet; that he would show me all honour, and fulfil, if possible, my slightest behest.

That evening the men became very jovial; there was a great deal of dancing, shouting, and clapping of hands, and evidently they ~~were~~ having a very good time. When the moon was full they always had some festivity, and liked to sit up late. The paymaster of Usumbora had given me a whistle, and I used to blow it when I thought it time for all to be asleep, and I seldom had to use it twice. If I did have to repeat the signal, it was always after they had indulged in a generous supply of "pombé," which has the same tongue-loosening

properties as Bass or any other brew when taken in large quantities.

The next morning, after tramping for about two hours, we had a long delay, trying to enlist some men from the village to give us their help in crossing the Livuvu River, which lay a few miles ahead. I gathered that it was a very risky undertaking, as it was a *bonâ-fide* river, and might be deep. If it proved very appalling, I determined—rather than be carried across in the men's arms and probably be dropped in the middle—to retire to a secluded spot, there divest myself of my garments, and walk through the water in my mackintosh. I also planned that I would first have the tent pitched on the opposite side, and a hot bath prepared, to follow the cold one as soon as possible.

After working it all out in my mind, I was rather looking forward to the excitement, and was a little disappointed to find that the difficulties had been overrated. We happened upon the river at a favourable season, and found it was not too deep for the men to ford; but I was afraid the machilla might hang too low, so I made them first take it across empty, so that I might see for myself how it went. I decided it was feasible, and we made a start. They carried it on their heads, and at the deepest part I took hold of the poles and drew myself up as high as possible, while some of the men assisted me to retain the position as long as necessary. I landed dry and triumphant, one more obstacle successfully overcome.

Although we had escaped one wetting, it looked as if our dry season was not to be a long one. I hurried the men on with the tent in the hope of being in time to avoid the coming storm, and we just managed to do it.

That afternoon I dealt out "poso" to the porters. At roll-call they all stood in a semicircle facing the tent, and those who remembered the particular appellation they started with answered when it was read out. A native always has a "Mukowa," which is his patronymic, but he has another by which he is commonly known, and this he changes according to fancy. For example, my boy registered himself as "Michael Mike," because his former master's name was Michael, and now, for aught I know, he may be figuring with another employer as "Mary Molly."

I now made these men decide upon their names, and promise to keep them until I broke up the caravan. Accordingly they were re-registered in a book by Mike, who wrote down their names, in a hand which would do credit to an English Bank clerk. He then ticked off ~~each~~ man in a most business-like way as he came to receive his pay. The small, red glass beads were all done up in bundles of three fundos, costing one rupee. Each man received one fundo, which is ten strings of about a foot long. This was his allowance for four days' food, and put into English money works out at a fraction over one penny farthing per day.

The askari are very important personages in

their own estimation. They each had an attendant boy, also a light, low tent between them, and I used to see far better straw being taken to their quarters than to mine. They also had the pick of what food was to be got in the villages. In their khaki uniform they looked fairly smart, but *en déshabille* quite the reverse. They then wore a waistcoat over a shirt which hung outside their long, loose Turkish trousers of white calico; and on their feet they wore easy shoes about three sizes too large. In this get-up they lounged about in dilapidated old deck-chairs, with a "this-is-what-we-do-in-the-army" kind of air, which amused me intensely.

I had only just finished giving the men their "poso" when a terrific storm broke over us, and, as the trench round the tent had not yet been dug, I was flooded out.

As I went on I grew wiser, and was very strict about this. Tired or not, the men had to make the trench the moment the camp was pitched, which in the end saved both them and me much trouble and discomfort.

As soon as the rain ceased all my things were removed from the tent and the wet earth scraped away. Several small fires were then lighted inside, the warm ashes from which were afterwards spread about to dry the ground; when that had been done, the driest leaves that could be found were brought in and placed under the ground sheet, and the tent once more became habitable.

Altogether our pitch that day was not a success ; we were too near the river, from which a reeking dampness was arising, and I sincerely hoped we should suffer no evil consequences. Naturally I was very anxious to avoid a chill, which would render me so much more liable to develop malaria, or any of the other ills that flesh is heir to, especially in Central Africa.

So far I had been fortunate enough to escape everything of the kind, and had no desire to fall sick in the midst of that wild plateau, miles away from assistance and medical aid. It would have been impossible to obtain any invalid nourishment, and I only possessed quinine and a few preventives rather than restoratives in the way of medicine. Whenever I allowed my mind to dwell on such possibilities, my utter aloofness was brought vividly home to me, and I had to banish any such pessimistic ideas as promptly as they occurred.

The air was often saturated with moisture at night. Sometimes my tent would be quite wet in the morning, and the damp atmosphere penetrated even into the interior. When I took off my clothes on going to bed I had to put them away in a tin box, otherwise they would have been too damp to put on next day. Even my hair-brush was affected, and the bristles became quite soft—in fact, everything in the tent was moist, and it was a perfect marvel how I escaped ague and rheumatism.

The following morning Mike met me with the news that we should have many “waters and

muds" that day, and he was quite correct. I was torn, dragged, and pushed over five rivers, or at any rate over as many bends of two rivers. I found it quite impossible to get at the facts of the case from the men, as the rivers were so winding, and natives can never enlighten one on such points.

My machila came through the ordeal with flying colours, and after that I felt it would stand anything. It was tested at most appalling angles. The man at the end of one pole might be on a firm conglomeration of earth and grass, raised a foot or two from the mud, while the man at the same end of the other pole was sunk to his knees in the slush, so that the machila was tilted to a most alarming degree, and I was obliged to cling on like grim death to a pole, or anything I thought would support me, shouting (at the same time) directions to every one.

The carriers were most willing, but had very little forethought, and by this time it was evident to me that in any emergency I had only myself to rely upon.

I knew we must be making endless pictures for the camera as we forced our way through the undergrowth, and felt so sorry that it was impossible to take them, for it would have been interesting to have had some tangible reminders of these exciting scrambles. But even, had there been any one with me capable of taking photographs, they would have been very difficult to get, as the



grass was yards over our heads and the light consequently not good enough for a snap-shot. Time exposures would have been out of the question under such critical conditions.

I have learnt by experience that many things seem very terrible until something worse happens. We had got over the difficulties and dangers of crossing the rivers, which at one time, we had regarded as almost insurmountable, but there were far more dangerous "rocks" ahead. These took the form of hundreds of infuriated savages, who made me feel as if my wild career were to be brought to a sudden termination, and with my quietus the worst predictions of the majority of those with whom I had discussed my journey, fulfilled.

There was no road of any kind to help us find our way across the plateau. We were only following native tracks, which are most mystifying to any but the initiated, and it was therefore the business of the askari to see that we had efficient local guides to conduct us from one landmark to the next, in the direction in which we wished to go. These one of the soldiers would get from the villages we passed, or sometimes he would catch some unwary being along the way, and regardless of any excuse that might be made, would force him to accompany us. It was absolutely necessary that, by fair means or foul, we should get a guide, but I am afraid the askari did not always try the fair means first.

On the morning in question I overtook the loads, all deserted on the ground, and at a little distance

there was a great hubbub among the carriers, who were breathless with excitement.

At the very moment that I arrived upon the scene, a soldier rejoined the party with a poor trembling wretch in his clutches. It appeared that the askari had been into the village which lay a little off our route, and the inhabitants, seeing them coming, had fled. After giving chase, this was the only one of the fugitives they could capture. I tried to soothe the man with kind words, which of course, conveyed no meaning to him; but Mike made him understand that I should be much obliged if he would consent to show us the way, that no harm should be done to him, and that he should have a present of salt when he had conducted us to the next point of our journey.

This little disturbance occupied some time, and the sun was getting high in the heavens; so without further delay we proceeded, taking the man with us.

We at once descended into a deep, narrow valley, which we had to cross, and when my machila was reversed to carry me backwards up the opposite side, I saw on the ridge, where a few moments ago not a soul was visible, hordes of natives gathering. Then they came racing helter-skelter down the hill with what seemed to me quite unnecessary speed, their numbers increasing from all sides.

They presented a most warlike and terrifying appearance, brandishing their spears above their heads as they ran, while their long, fringing draperies floated out behind them in the breeze.

I anxiously consulted Mike what he thought they were doing, but he did not seem much concerned, and replied in an indifferent tone, that they were only following their chief. However, I knew it was not safe to assume from his manner that there was no danger. From my experience of the natives, I knew that they were absolutely unimaginative, and that a catastrophe, which any one of ordinary intelligence could foresee, might actually overwhelm them before they would think of making any preparation to meet it. So I said, "Yes, but I am sure that they are following us too, and I am afraid that we shall have trouble because of the man we have brought away with us."

By this time we had reached the top of the hill, and my machila had been turned round again with my face looking forward, so that I was not at all easy in my mind as to what might be taking place in the rear, and I urged Mike and the askari to keep me well posted in every movement of the pursuing natives, and to be sure and tell me when they were near.

After a few minutes, which seemed like weeks to me, Mike informed me, "They are now getting close."

I had by this time braced myself up to face the position. I meant at the worst to die game and have the wounds in front; so in less time than it takes me to write, I was out of the machila and had taken up a place under a solitary tree. As I chose this position there sprang into my mind a picture of

St. Sebastian riddled with arrows, and I mentally substituted myself and spears.

I awaited the approach of the enemy sitting on a box of food, which I hoped I might live to want, even although it was in tins.

Nearer and nearer came the infuriated mob, until they drew up just in front of me. A small group, whom I took to be the Sultan and his headmen, separated themselves from the general rabble, and came a little forward. The uproar was so great, that I could scarcely hear myself speak, so I requested the Sultan and his retinue to remain, and let the others retire to a distance.

Rooted in my memory, I have a picture of them as they obeyed and squatted on the ridge of the hill, with their gleaming spears held upright, and silhouetted against the sky. I could not help admiring the warlike, savage spectacle, although I shuddered to think that at the first sign of the chief those same picturesque spears would perhaps be hurled at me in wild fury.

In the midst of such unusual excitement and surroundings, with the blazing vertical sun and the unclouded sky above, hopelessly distant from any succour should it be needed, I, a solitary white woman faced the dusky chief, and the parley began.

During the dual translation of the conference, I had time to see that the Sultan was a young fellow of about twenty-four, with a lightish brown skin, well oiled and polished, his head shaven



THE CHIEF



except for a circle of about 3 inches of hair on the top, and another at the back. He was tall and slim, and held himself extremely well. He wore what had once been a piece of bark cloth, which, after much wear, frays out and becomes like a long fringe. It was bound at the top with a coarse native cord of plaited straw, looking in the sun like gold braid. This garment was fastened over one shoulder, and hung to about the knees, giving him a decidedly picturesque if bizarre appearance.

His anger was at white heat, but outwardly he was very calm and dignified, and stated his case concisely.

"Your soldiers," he said, "have been to the village in my absence, and seized one of my men, besides carrying off spears which were dropped by others in their flight."

I expressed my regret, and told him that it was not with my sanction that this had been done; neither did I know that any spears had been brought away, and I assured him they should be returned at once. This appeared to mollify him somewhat, then I explained to him that it was quite necessary for me to have a guide. I said that I should be very glad if he would allow some one to come with me as far as the next river, and he answered to the effect that nothing would give him greater pleasure; two or three men should be sent, but he could not spare the one we had taken, as he was a herdsman and was needed to milk the cows.

I felt that I had taken a new lease of life when

we came to this amicable understanding. There was a visible stir among the men in the background, who began to feel that "the white Queen" and their own Sultan were evidently coming to terms, and that bloodshed would be unnecessary. I think my own porters had remained so calm because they never doubted the omnipotence of the white skin to overcome every difficulty.

The Sultan posed for his portrait, which I greatly prize as a memento of one of the most thrilling incidents of my life. He then presented me with a brass wire bracelet from his arm, and I returned the compliment with much salt, after which we parted the best of friends.

Had the chief and his followers been more hasty, or less willing for an explanation, the consequences might easily have proved fatal to me, but as it turned out, the incident was a striking example of what can be effected by a little courtesy even among so-called savages.

These justly angered, but now happily pacified people wended their way back to their village in a much quieter manner than they had left it.

We continued on our way for about 8 miles, and camped on an eminence in a dry atmosphere. I had not been there long when word was brought to me that the Sultan had sent me a fine goat as a present, so I felt I must have impressed him as favourably as he had me.

We were then just a week out from Usumbora. I had quite settled down to the life, and found it



most fascinating, especially in dry weather. When thinking over the events of the past few days, I felt that so far, I had been very lucky, and I trusted that any other difficulties which might present themselves in the future, would be surmounted as successfully as those which had overtaken us already.

## CHAPTER XVI

### KANYINYA

Fearful storm—Askari terrifies me—Reminded of Yellowstone Park—A difficult river to cross—Quarrels to settle—Natives wonderment at sight of glass—Taking snuff—Arrive at Mission—A day's rest—Pay my men with salt—People flock in for it—Pole of tent collapses—Fathers to the rescue—Wild flowers—Cross river in dug-outs—Hill-fires alarm me

THE next day was cool and delicious, much more typical of England than of Central Africa, and I was able to enjoy a rather longer walk than usual. The thunderstorms in the wet season work up so regularly that one can time them almost to an hour. We calculated that we should hardly be able to get to camp that day before one was due, but happily we did, so that the tent was erected on dry ground.

Later in the afternoon a terrific storm broke over us, with blinding lightning, followed by deafening roars of thunder and torrential rain, which lasted the whole evening. I was truly thankful for the shelter even of a tent.

Just before dinner, which, owing to the storm the boys had great difficulty in bringing to me

from the kitchen, John came to tell me that another askari had arrived, bringing me letters.

The man entered my tent, and I could see he was saturated to the skin. He handed me a very wet and official-looking leather case, and my heart sank within me at the thought, that probably the native rising had spread so far north, that the Government had deemed it advisable to recall me, so that, after all I had gone through, my hopes were to be dashed to the ground.

The storm had worked me up to such a pitch of nerve tension that I thought everything must go wrong, and I hardly dared open the packet, but looking up and seeing the poor drenched soldier waiting, I could not delay, so with trembling fingers the seal was broken, when to my joy, I discovered the contents were not for me, but for the Commandant. The man had been told that if he came across my caravan, he was to take on news of me to the captain, so I wrote a letter telling him my whereabouts, and that all was so far well. This I placed with the other documents in the case, and returned it to the messenger.

It was such little attentions as this that impressed me with the extreme thoughtfulness of all the Government officials for me, and now, on looking back, I can better realise the terrible things which they, with their greater experience, knew might happen to me, and what an anxiety I must have been to them.

The next morning dawned gloriously fine, and

for some miles our way lay across a dividing ridge between a succession of valleys. One in particular reminded me forcibly of the Yellowstone Park in America—not the scenery itself so much as the general effect. Little clumps of clouds from the previous night's storm still hovered about the valley, and were pierced here and there by a stray hillock, looking like a geyser. The tropical sun was drawing up the moisture, and enveloping the whole landscape in waves of mist, which helped to carry out the illusion, and brought back to my mind the beauties of the Upper Geyser Basin. I always try when travelling, to associate what I see with something I remember in other parts of the world previously visited. I thus renew my acquaintance with some lovely spots, and keep them fresh in my memory.

Some hours after leaving the ridge we descended to a river, which looked a hopeless mass of grass. The loads were got over, but the men shouted back that 'we had better not attempt to follow them ; so a survey party had to bestir themselves to find a better crossing, and we finally had to cut our way through a little higher up, the men laying down the grass as they cut it, to form as much foothold as possible. The Commandant had very recently crossed this river, and no doubt there had been a good path cut for him, but the men had stupidly missed it, although they had been told to keep their eyes open for any such advantage.

We travelled six and a half hours that day,

making good progress, and we hoped to reach a Mission station of the White Fathers the next morning.

As we moved from camp to camp I was continually having to settle small squabbles between my own retinue and the people among whom we were sojourning. I am afraid that the porters, when they got the chance, took advantage of the protection and prestige afforded them by travelling with a European to pillage all they could from the villagers. That afternoon they had the effrontery to take for their own use some beautiful clean grass, which was tied up in neat bundles all ready to thatch the owner's hut. I had no sooner seen it restored, than I was obliged to evict several machila men, who had taken entire possession of another man's abode.

After tea I took a walk round to see the natives, as I always did when there was any village near. The chief was not at home, but his son was, a lad of about sixteen, and again I noticed how well the "upper ten" keep their skins by oiling and rubbing it, which gives it a pleasing texture and makes a great contrast to that of the lower class.

The youth asked me to visit his mother and sister, whom I found huddled up just inside their hut. I talked a little to them, and inquired how they passed their time. I found they did next to nothing, so how their minds were occupied I cannot imagine. I daresay my visit gave them food for thought for many a month to come. I told the

brother if he returned with me to the tent I would send them a few beads, so that they could make themselves some new finery. I did not give them the "currency" of the country, but some mixed kindergarten beads which I had brought from home. They happened to be in a small box with a glass lid. None of these people had ever seen glass before, which fact was first disclosed to me by the boy's look of astonishment. He could not understand how he could see the beads, and yet not be able to touch them or get them out. Then I took the top off, and he looked through it awe-stricken. When he had recovered sufficiently from his amazement, he tore off to exhibit the curiosity to his village, and I feel quite sure that it will be handed down as an heirloom in the family for generations.

My men had a little habit which I do not think I have mentioned, but which was a great source of amusement to me, and that was their curious way of inhaling their "nose-oil." This is a concoction made from tobacco: they put the leaves in a gourd, pour water on them, and after allowing them to soak for a few minutes, they squeeze out the juice. A thin, treacle-like fluid is the result, and this they snuff up from the palms of their hands, and then quickly close their nostrils, either with their fingers, or more frequently with a cleft stick, which they place on their noses, and wear until the effect of the snuff is exhausted.

My men liked to take it immediately before

setting out in the morning, and as I often had to chase them away from the fires to get them to start, it was a ludicrous sight to see them flying before me with these "clothes-pegs" on their noses. At first it was as much as I could do to refrain from laughter and maintain a sufficiently severe expression of countenance.

The next morning I started onward, feeling delighted that there was a prospect of reaching the Mission that day, and once more seeing a white face. Before we got there two rivers had to be crossed, but we luckily hit upon the track of the Commandant, so the obstructions which might otherwise have proved very difficult had been made comparatively easy. It was quite on the cards that I might meet him at the Mission, but unfortunately when I got there I found he had left three days previously.

#### KANYINYA

Towards noon we came in sight of the hill at Kanyinya, on which the White Fathers had settled about eight months before, and half an hour later I was brought to a standstill in front of three of them, who had emerged from a small hut to welcome me. My first desire was to find out in which language our intercourse could be carried on, and I felt sorry it was not my own; but the trio was formed of one Dutchman, one Fleming, and one German. Not knowing a word of the language of either of the former, and none of them speaking English, I

had perforce to start off with German. They took me into their little abode, and "wine that maketh glad the heart of man" was passed round in honour of the occasion. The Fathers apologised for not having a room to offer me; they had arrived so recently in the country that they were only living in temporary sheds themselves; but they cordially invited me to join them at their meals as long as I remained. They then indicated to the porters a spot a little below the hill as the best location for my tent.

My appearance caused a great sensation, as the people thereabouts were hardly yet accustomed to white people, even of the male sex.

As we had come thus far—ten whole days—without a break except just for the night, I decided to have a day off here, so that we might all recuperate. The garden, owing to its extreme youth, was almost devoid of vegetables. This I learned with regret, as I had been looking forward to getting some.

The news of my arrival spread quickly in the district, and the people clustered round my tent to obtain a peep at me. One woman brought her baby to show me. She came nervously towards the tent, wearing a curious headgear like a deep strawberry-punnet, made of bright yellow reeds, which I learned is the correct thing for a young mother. So fashion reigns, even there.

As I had plenty of time, and salt took longer to distribute than beads, I thought I would "poso"





A CAMP SCENE



the men with it that day. So my indiarubber bath was placed on the table, and three bundles of salt emptied therein. The men were called to form in line, but on catching sight of it, they said they did not want salt, as they could not barter with it to their satisfaction in this neighbourhood. This I guessed to be purely imaginary, but I asked the askari if it were so, and as his opinion coincided with mine, I insisted upon them having it. Several got up to go away, but in a very firm manner, I gave them to understand it was that or nothing. They were not best pleased, but wisely decided, though in a sulky manner, to conform to my wishes.

Mike read each name on the list in turn, and as they came forward, I doled out four cupsful to each. I must say it was not easy for them to carry it. Some took it in little baskets they had ; some lifted up a corner of their rags ; others picked bits of banana leaves and twisted them up to hold it. The next evening I was told by one of the Fathers, who had returned from some distance, that the people were tramping in from miles round with all they had to sell, having heard, he said, that my porters had been paid in salt, which they were most keen to get. I thought it would be a salutary lesson to the men for the future, so I pointed out to them how foolish they had been, and what they would have lost had I let them have their own way.

Towards evening I dressed, and went up to dine with the Fathers, and found them very pleasant

and conversational. I only hope they thought my society equally agreeable. It was pitch dark outside the hut, but, although I could not see them, I somehow felt that there were many faces, as dark as the night, peering round the door to satisfy their curiosity as to how the white woman transferred the food from the plate to her mouth; would she pick it up as they did, with their fingers, or was she really on an equality with the men, and able to use the strange implements placed upon the table?

About eight o'clock, the Fathers escorted me down to my tent, which was at a little distance from their huts. As we approached all was silent, and they remarked upon the quietness of my carriers. I thought to myself, "Ah, my friends, wait until you are gone!" I knew well enough that our hurricane lamp had been seen from afar, and they were only waiting for the Fathers to be out of sight again, to recommence their endless gossip. It will always remain a mystery to me what they could find to talk about so much; it must have been mere chatter, for the sake of chattering.

It was such a treat the next morning to behave like a rational being, have a cup of tea, then a nice bath without any hurry, and breakfast to follow. On the tramp there was only time in the morning for a "lick and a promise," the promise being always fulfilled by a hot bath half an hour before dinner, which was very refreshing after the heat of the day. The water for it, was fetched and heated in a large

kerosene can which I had obtained for the purpose. These tins are so convenient that they figure in every caravan. They are simply big cans in which kerosene has been brought up-country, and can be obtained at all the stores in Central Africa.

The water we got on the way was mostly clean, but sometimes I was perfectly horrified when I saw my bath filled with a filthy-looking fluid, and I often hesitated whether to use it or not. Later on, when I had arrived at Bukoba, and was relating this to the Commandant, he declared that they were rather proud of their variety of water. "For instance," he said, "you can have either tea, coffee, or chocolate water!"

My bath itself was most useful in more ways than one: it served as a wash-tub for my woollen garments, which I would not allow the boys to take to the stream as they did the cotton things. But notwithstanding all my care, my clothes were shrinking every time they were washed, which was a serious matter when the nearest outfitter was 1,000 miles away.

The Fathers kindly took me all over the buildings they had in course of construction. The house bade fair to be an imposing edifice; it was being built of sun-baked bricks, and was planned to accommodate six people, allowing a sitting-room and bedroom for each. It was rapidly nearing completion, and testified to the industry and perseverance of all concerned.

I noticed during my stay at Kanyinya that the

top pole of my tent seemed rather low, and bent in the middle, so that I could scarcely stand upright, and just as I was leaving it on the second morning, a mysterious creaking was heard, followed by the complete collapse of the tent. It had been carelessly put up, and too much pressure placed upon the joint, which could bear the strain no longer. Such was the irresponsibility of my followers, soldiers and boys alike, that they were actually doing up the broken pole with the rest, not thinking or caring in the least what was to be done when the tent was next required. I told the askari to take it to the Mission at once, and hear what the Fathers could suggest.

I waited over an hour, and then walked up the hill to see what was being done. I found that the Fathers had been working hard with saw and chisel, and had just completed a new pole. It was most kind of them, and I was very grateful. Had the accident occurred far away from such assistance, it might have hindered us for days, but happening where it did, with an hour and a half's delay, the trouble was at an end.

The morning was still young (7.30 a.m.) when we were on our way again. We bore along the margin of several very pretty little lakes—"little" for that country, but bigger than most of those we have in England. They all seemed to be connected by more or less dried-up rivers with little water and much grass. It was late and very hot before we finished our day's journey, and I was

very thankful when we reached our halting-place, to get a rest and some refreshment.

Soon after we arrived at camp there was a great coming and going, and arranging of presents outside my tent, and presently Mike came to tell me that all was ready for my acceptance. To my surprise I saw three goats tethered, besides various other things, such as eggs and milk, beans, native beer, and bananas. I told the Sultan I thought the supply was too abundant, but he said the Commandant had been there a few days before, and left instructions that when I came, I was to be treated liberally. This forethought was yet another instance of the kindness and consideration which I experienced everywhere.

On the morrow we passed through a different type of country altogether. For about four hours our way was along a soft, flat path down the centre of a broad valley, and as the sun was overcast I walked nearly all the distance. Small game was very plentiful, and could be seen in all directions seeking cover behind rocks and trees.

Wild flowers with their brilliant hues added a charm to the landscape ; some were bright red, and clustered up a long stem ; some were like "red-hot poker," while others resembled tufts of lavender. There were blossoms something in the nature of red honeysuckle ; trees with flowers which reminded me of jonquils, and everywhere the still faithful convolvulus.

There were a few birds, though no songsters ;

some had brilliantly coloured plumage, but the majority of them were like pale-coloured canaries with very long tails.

The next morning we enlisted four sturdy men from the village to go a little way with us. They were armed with great knives and hatchets, which they used to some purpose, in cutting me a way through a thick wood, and their energy was evidently contagious, for my own men worked much better, and we got along right well.

After a time we were clear of the wood, and came upon open country, and then for several hours we skirted a huge swamp of papyrus and giant grass, which had evidently been an immense lake in former years. Towards the end for which we were making, the lake narrowed, and formed a river, two channels of which we had to cross in dug-outs. The first channel did not look very deep, so I suggested that I should be carried across in the machila, as I had been over the Livuvu. At this the men's looks expressed extreme horror, which I could not account for, until I was told that it swarmed with crocodiles.

The dug-outs used for crossing rivers belonged, as a rule, to the chief of the adjacent village, and in order that they should be ready and manned when we arrived, the askari would send on a runner to give notice of our approach. It was a pleasant break in our usual routine, and it was very amusing to watch the canoes being packed and unpacked; luggage, porters, chickens, all and every-



thing had to be transferred to the other side in the elongated "wash-tubs."

When we had safely crossed the first river, there was a short distance to go through thick undergrowth to the other, which was negotiated with the same success.

We passed several villages during the day, and for the first time the people all ran out in a friendly manner to see us pass, following along with us for a space, and shouting on their highest note, while they tapped their hands against their lips, just in the same peculiar way that the inhabitants of the first plateau had done.

We secured another dry camp that night, and I felt things were progressing favourably. We had almost completed half the journey, which encouraged me to hope, that if only I and my porters could keep well, I should in time reach the Victoria Nyanza. But at least another fortnight of travel lay before me, and in less time than that many a tragic scene might be enacted. In an ordinary way, having tested my men, and settled to the roving life, not a fear would have assailed me, but, as I have said before, there was a serious rising in the south, and it was impossible to predict how far or how soon it would spread.

When I remarked to my fellow-passenger coming up Tanganyika that I thought news of that kind must take some time to reach so far north, he said encouragingly, "Oh no, the natives manage that very quickly." They have an astonishing telegraphic

code worked by fires on the different hills, in the same way that the defeat of the Spanish Armada was made known in England over three hundred years ago ; so I knew that if the rising became general, the information would be circulated among the natives in no time, and long before the Government could get wind of it. As it was the season for grass fires, I was kept in a continual state of alarm. In the darkness of the night I would watch the flames ascending to the sky, and fancy I could read, " Kill the palefaces," " Down with the White Government," and other equally cheering messages, which fortunately for me were only evolved from my own feverish imagination.

Before reaching the second Mission we had a very wide lake to cross. Four dug-outs awaited us, and each trip occupied about thirty minutes, so it was nearly two hours before the whole caravan was ferried over. I went first with Mike and one of the soldiers, after which I had plenty of time to rest and watch the disembarkation of my goods and chattels.

It was a glorious morning ; the water was sparkling in the sun, and from the cover of the high grasses at the margin of the lake flew numbers of wildfowl hither and thither, wondering what all the commotion could be about. It was tantalising to reflect what a welcome addition to the pot a few of them would have made, had I only been able to shoot.

After the owner of the canoes and the men who

had assisted us across were "salted," we continued our course. Somehow the news that a caravan is on the road is very quickly noised abroad, so that our advent was not quite unexpected at the Mission we were approaching.

## CHAPTER XVII

### NOTRE DAME DE TOUTES LES SAINTES

Another Mission—I astonish the natives—Their disbelief in the existence of white women—Flooded out—Trouble with my carriers—At last we start—Supplemented by Mission boys—I acquire a commander-in-chief—A change in type of scenery—Through picturesque waterway—Soldiers return to Usumbora

WE made our way up a shady avenue to the Mission, and met the Fathers coming down to look for us. As they turned back with me, they said they would be very glad if I would take pot-luck with them, for although they knew I was on the way, and should be arriving some day, they had no idea until an hour before that I was so near.

The only two Missions I came to on this plateau were separated by four days' march, and I felt it was almost too soon for another day off, but it was far better for me to have it where, besides companionship, I could get some well-cooked food.

At the station, which had been established some years, and was consequently in full working order, there were three Fathers and one Brother. They each had a separate apartment, and there was a general dining-room, besides a good class-room,

where they gave Bible instruction, and taught reading and writing in the native language.

The church was capable of holding at least two hundred people, and the only belfry the country can boast of stood outside. It was a narrow, mud-brick tower with a thatched roof, surmounted by a rudely carved wooden cross. In the morning, as I lay in my tent close by, I heard, instead of a drum, the bell calling the people to service, preparatory to their day's work. The sound transported me back to old England, and made me feel that I could not really be in Central Africa.

The Father took me all round the station, and as I stood for a moment looking up the church, a few natives straggled in, and dipping their fingers in the holy water, crossed themselves. Judging from what I had seen of their primitive life and way of thinking, I could not help wondering how far they understood what they were doing.

The inside of the church was lined with reeds tied together with a dark fibre, and the chancel was divided from the body of the church by a screen made in the same manner.

I caused quite as much surprise among the people here, as I had done at Kanyinya. At first they were rather shy, but soon they gained confidence to come near, and gaze to their heart's content. When I walked about their astonishment knew no bounds, and I felt they looked upon me as we do on a mechanical toy. A little later they expressed to one of the Fathers their entire satisfaction at

having seen me, and he himself added, that he was very glad I had come to demonstrate to them that such a *rara avis* as a white woman really existed, as he was confident that hitherto they had doubted the fact.

To my joy, I found that the Fathers had a well-matured vegetable garden, and I was promised, besides other things, enough European potatoes to serve me until I got to Bukoba.

Although rain was sadly needed and said to be much overdue, there was not the slightest indication of it being so near, but that afternoon a storm burst over the place, and we were all nearly drowned. My tent was pitched on hard, rather sloping ground, and in a few minutes I was practically in the course of a rushing river, the trench being totally inadequate to carry off the water. I whistled frantically for the porters to come and enlarge it, and after a time they were got together, but their labour was useless against Nature in such a fury. So I piled my properties one on top of another to raise them from the ground, and then I managed to find room to squeeze myself on to the bed, where I remained for two hours while the water rushed beneath me.

Such a *contre-temps* was most disconcerting, and it would have been more than human not to have wished myself elsewhere. Fortunately, I was to dine under more pleasant auspices, in a well-sheltered, dry room. This was my last meal in civilised society until I got to Bukoba. When





A MIDDAY HALT



THE MISSION CONFRATERNITY



the Fathers conducted me back to my tent at night, the storm was nearly over. I have a vivid recollection of them standing bareheaded in the long, white robes of their order, uttering polite and genial little speeches of farewell to me.

These White Fathers differ from missionaries of other denominations, in that, when they go to Central Africa, it is either for life or until they are incapacitated for further work there. I could not but admire such whole-hearted, earnest men, though my uppermost feeling was one of pity for their isolated condition. In this order the Fathers are priests, the Brothers laymen, and the Sisters nuns.

After the day's rest I hoped my men would be fresh and ready for an early start, instead of which they were unusually troublesome. When I wanted my machila dried and the tent taken down, not one of them was forthcoming. I could see them all in a long shed, open at one side, coddling round their little fires, idling over their food, as if there were nothing in the world to do. I remonstrated with the askari, and said he must fetch them at once, but he seemed quite powerless to move them, so at last I had to take matters into my own hands. With giant strides, and stick in hand, I went towards the shed. The moment they saw me coming they knew the game was up, and fled before me like the wind, leaving their fires and little heaps of—to them—tempting delicacies on the ground. I felt like Hercules clearing the Augean stables, and I am sure he did not do it more thoroughly.

At last I thought I had set them all to work, and that there was still a chance of getting off in reasonable time, but presently when I was sitting at breakfast, I became conscious that something out of the common was in progress. I saw a procession coming towards me, with a helpless figure carried in the midst, and could not imagine who or what it could be; but I meant to treat the whole circumstance with indifference, so I feigned not to see them.

The body was deposited on the ground like a corpse, in front of my table, while the *capitao* stood over it, straight and erect as the spear he held at his side, and looking like a Roman warrior, with his flowing drapery thrown over one shoulder. All the men gathered round, and squatted on their heels in a semicircle behind him.

After a while I looked up, and in a very casual manner asked what was amiss. Mike, after much hesitation, replied, "They say I have killed him."

"You," I said; "what do you mean?"

Then he confessed that the man in question had come to his hut the night before, and he had kicked him out, but had not hurt him. However, after that, he said, he heard the askari give him "two handfuls"—I gathered later he meant two blows in the eye.

I knew all the men had been more or less drunk the night before, so I soon put two and two together, and arrived at the conclusion that this one had got the worst of some tipsy squabble. So

I told them what I thought, motioning them away indignantly, saying, "Go! You must settle your drunken quarrels yourselves. I will have nothing to do with them. If the man is not fit to go on, it is his own fault, and he must be left behind."

They seemed astounded at my summary dismissal of the case, and six or seven men quietly picked up the prostrate body and carried it off again. I never saw the man's face, as he kept it covered with his hands the whole time. Some hours after, when we were once more on our way, I inquired what had been done with him, and Mike replied, "He is not carrying a load, but he is coming on all right." So, though they wished me to believe he was incapable even of standing, he was quite able to walk for five or six hours, and I heard no more of the affair. This was just another example of their tendency to exaggerate, and I felt I had been wise to treat them with a show of indifference. I happened to catch sight of the man afterwards, and he certainly had two terrible black eyes.

After this fatiguing contention with the porters, I was glad when we started, to lie quietly in the machila and rest a little, until I was capable of enjoying the surrounding scenery. As we skirted the hills over paths of greensward, we could overlook tier upon tier of mountains rising in the distance, under the cerulean canopy of heaven. The calmness and immensity of the scene made all lesser things of life seem trivial by comparison, and

caused a serene and peaceful feeling to steal over my spirit.

That afternoon, I was asked to write out particulars of a bundle which the askari said had been found on the road, deserted by a man who had run away on seeing our caravan—a sure sign, I was told, that he had stolen it. They proposed to leave it with the chief of the village, together with my list of its contents, to await their return on their homeward journey from Bukoba.

I did not believe it was stolen, but thought it very likely that the owner had fled in terror of the cavalcade, which proved to be the case, as the next morning a boy arrived from the Mission we had just left, with a note from the Father, saying that it was a bundle belonging to one of their boys, and asking me to return it by the bearer.

The next day the men had recovered from their drinking bout; they were up at dawn, and made an early start without the aid of the stick. We marched from six until ten, but notwithstanding the men worked well, we did not make much progress, as the route was very hilly and circuitous, although beautiful. The country here is not well wooded; the few trees there are grow mostly on the hilltops, which are very fresh and green.

My party had been supplemented at the station of "Notre Dame de toutes les Saintes" by several Mission boys, who were returning to Bukoba by the route I wished to follow, and who, the Fathers thought, would be a great help in showing my

porters the way. These boys all wore rosaries with crucifixes attached ; once when I gave one of them a pill, he held it in his open palm, solemnly crossed himself, then murmured a prayer and crossed himself again before he swallowed it. Witnessed in the midst of such savagery, it was a very curious and suggestive sight.

One of the new recruits was quite an intelligent youth ; he was small and sturdy for a native, and evidently of some standing, as he possessed plenty of draperies and, what is much prized by blacks of any class, an umbrella. He constituted himself my general overseer, and if he thought the others were not doing their duty he was after them like a terrier. I dubbed him my little Commander-in-Chief, and he wore an air of importance which accorded well with the title. He would walk in front of the machila men, with his drapery thrown over one shoulder, and a white cloth twisted round his head turban-fashion, like an Arab sheik. He made it his task to pick out the best path, then with a wave of his "mother gamp" direct the men where to go ; he really had some brains, and knew how to use them.

The next day's march was somewhat long, but I thoroughly enjoyed it, as there was so much variety in the aspect of our surroundings, and the weather was perfect. We wound in and out among the hills in a marvellous way, ascending and descending some very precipitous and stony places, and I was thankful to use one of the many spears as an alpen-stock. The men themselves were always ready to

help me, though their way of doing so was a little clumsy sometimes. To assist me over some stones at this part of the journey, one of them took hold of my arm so tightly that it was quite painful for some time afterwards. At one place we had to get across a mass of granite boulders, which looked as if there had been an eruption at this spot in bygone ages. When we were on the highest hill, I could see in the distance immense streaks of water shining like glass under the mid-day sun. Knowing the river we were to cross the following day lay in that direction, I was anxious to push on and get as near to it as possible before camping, so that we might get through the commotion of crossing early in the morning. It is always better, when possible, to have such interruptions before the sun becomes too fierce. But notwithstanding my efforts, I discovered the next morning that we were still two and a half hours from the river; so to hasten matters, one askari preceded us with the loads, and when we arrived all the canoes had started with the first instalment of baggage, and were out of sight.

It was a very pretty halting-place, with a broad, sloping way to the river, cut through the high grass. The carriers sat, stood, or lay about in all sorts of attitudes, some drinking the water, and others refreshing themselves with a wash. Two of my young Mission followers were taking 20 Bukoba about one hundred goats, and these, grouped on the incline, completed the picture. The boys always had to find shelter for these animals at

night, or they would have been devoured by wild beasts.

When I caught sight of the dug-outs coming round a bend of the river, I was assailed by the fear that I should never get to the other side. Their shape was so peculiar and curly that it was almost impossible for me to get in; but I somehow managed it sideways, and then had to sit in the bottom of the boat, with only my head and shoulders above the sides. It was such a tight fit that, had we capsized, nothing could have saved me. Fortunately the natives are careful, and looked well to the balance of the small skiff.

We did not go straight across the river, but followed the channel for a few hundred yards, and then turned up a water-alley cut through the swamp, the grasses meeting like an arch over our heads and forming a green tunnel. It was one of the quaintest sights I ever beheld: the picturesque canoe, with myself and my dog at one end, my most valued boxes in the middle, and at the other end Mike and the askari, the latter balancing his rifle to keep it out of the water; while half in and half out of the boat sat a queer-looking old nigger, who was carefully propelling and steering us up the half-mile or so of waterway. It was such a strange and novel experience that I wished the passage had been twice as long. It took some time to collect the party on the other side, but finally it was accomplished satisfactorily. None of the men could name the river, but all knew it was the boundary between

the Bukoba and Usumbora districts. Here the askari were instructed to leave me, so I gave them rations for the return journey, supplemented by a tip, and then we quickly got into marching order again.

As I was lifted in my machila, the two askari stood at the salute, and I was carried past them to commence another phase of my journey.

The whole caravan was now without a firearm of any description, and still eight or nine days must elapse before I could expect to be under the protection of Europeans once more. The soldiers had certainly been a great help in looking after the men and keeping them together on the march. A caravan of forty gives one woman rather more than she can do, especially if she is unacquainted with the vernacular; nevertheless I had a feeling that we should now get along better with the people *en route*, which proved to be the case. The porters by this time were really no trouble; like children they were quick to see that I meant what I said, and I was very careful never to give an order unless I intended it should be obeyed, so that I had them quite under control.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### NYAKAANGIVA AND KANAZI

The wilderness—"Hippos" and "Rhinos"—Men on short commons—My pity wasted—Splendid agricultural district—Government camping-grounds—Natives in better circumstances—Entertained by the Sultan Chobya—Just escape storm—"First aid" whilst waiting—Women more emancipated—My dress admired—First view of Victoria Nyanza—Kanzai—Men worn out—Invite one of the wives of the Sultan to London—Bukoba—Civilisation once more

**B**EYOND the river we passed through sylvan glades, which became wilder and yet wilder, until the men had literally to cut a way step by step through the thicket, and we came at last to an open space in the middle of the wilderness, where we pitched camp for the night. There was not a human being anywhere for miles, and a more desolate spot it would be difficult to imagine, but it had its own peculiar enchantment.

Close by there was a large romantic-looking lake, which was absolutely alive with "hippos" and "rhinos." I could see the former leaping out and diving into the water like elephantine porpoises, and the latter wallowing in the swamps by the side. I was told that the track of a rhino had been seen

in many places leading up to the hills behind us, where they were evidently accustomed to go in search of green food. This information made me extremely uneasy about my location for the night. In a way I feared them more than lions, which are very careful not to come in contact with human beings unnecessarily. But I thought if my tent happened to be in the way of a rhino he might, without any personal animosity, walk over it quite casually, making short work of both it, and me. As I sat in my tent, the grunting and snorting of these colossal brutes was so distinct that I could scarcely believe that they were not within a few yards of me.

I told the men they would have to close round my tent that night, and as this set had never slept out in the open since they had been with me, I hoped my order would not cause any dissension among them, particularly now that I had no askari to help me enforce obedience. But I found their fear of the animals was quite as great as my own, and they lay all round me, and kept the watch-fires going well during the night.

I should not have been content to sleep as I had done hitherto, had I not known that lions and leopards are very rare in this part of German territory. All wild beasts seem to fear artificial light; so if a good blaze be kept up, one may be pretty certain they will not venture near unless they are uncommonly ravenous. I found the greatest comfort in Maffi, as I knew he would sniff danger from afar and give me timely warning.

Though the denizens of the lake may have found plenty to eat in the neighbourhood, there was nothing for the porters. They had brought a certain amount with them, as they knew we should have to camp that night far away from any human habitation, but they are never quite so lively as when food is cheap and plentiful. That writer hit the mark who said: "They are a cheery lot, with heads like iron, feet like leather, and with the stomachs of ostriches; miserable, like children, in cold and wet districts, or in times when food is scarce, but forgetting all their discomforts with the first ray of sunshine, or with the first successful shot at a rhinoceros, zebra, or other animal which will supply them with meat."

The next morning we encountered a violent storm. It was short and sharp, but the rain was so heavy that it penetrated even the canvas of the machila. We were, at the time, on a very narrow, rough, and stony path. Had it been fine I should certainly have been on foot, but in such a storm it would have been madness. The stones were too slippery for the men to secure a firm foothold, and every moment I expected to be thrown headlong to the ground. I could only get peeps from under my cover of what was taking place outside; the men looked drenched and miserable, and were very quiet. My sympathies were aroused by their sorry plight, and I was feeling grieved for them, when they suddenly became most jovial, singing and laughing as if they had not a care in the world.

The truth is that the native has nothing to worry about if it rains : he simply removes his bit of loin-cloth, or goat-skin as the case may be, hangs it on his spear over his shoulder, and when the sun comes out, which it does the moment the storm has passed, his entire wardrobe has been washed and dried, and he himself has had a delightful shower-bath.

Mine was not a parallel case, so when we got to camp I made them light several fires to dry the machila, rugs, and pillows. I also insisted upon all my work being done before the men dispersed.

Our camp lay between two villages, separated by a large banana grove. A great many people passed my tent, probably on the way home from their gardens, which often lie a mile or two away from their huts. I have seen whole villages practically deserted during the day-time while the inhabitants are away gardening. This only happens at certain times of the year ; and then their absorption in their work has originated the saying : "Your head is in your garden," meaning what we express by "You are woolgathering."

After the askari left I thought it best to see the whole caravan started each day, and be the last myself to leave the camp. The men tried their hardest to stay round the fires smoking, but I chased them off with a big stick, which I found a most efficacious method. The more I saw of the natives, the more they impressed me with their childish temperament. Once or twice, after I had



A DEAD 'HIPPO'



A BANANA GROVE



been very angry with them, they seemed quite downcast, and then, just as I was thinking, "Poor fellows! perhaps I have been too hard on them," the air would suddenly be rent by peals of laughter, and all my regrets vanished when I saw how little my severity affected them.

We were now passing through a splendid agricultural district, with flourishing fields of sweet potatoes, millet, and rice. Large herds of cattle were grazing in the vicinity, and the general effect was almost homelike, until we came to some magnificent banana groves, which, for some unknown reason, always seem to cast a spell on me, and make me feel as if I were passing through fairyland.

A fresh variety of flowers now luxuriated around us, principally a gorgeous blood-red thistle, and over the grass a yellow creeper rioted in great profusion.

We had come along well, and were only half a day's march from what the boys called a "white man's road"—as distinguished from the native tracks on which we had hitherto been travelling. This "white man's road" was the one following the lake from Mwanza to Bukoba; along it was a complete system of Government camping-grounds, placed at intervals of 10 or 12 miles, which prove a wonderful boon to weary travellers, be they black or white. They consist of a large clearing, enclosed by a good bamboo fence, in a suitable place near water. Inside the enclosure are several

well-built sheds or huts, sufficient to shelter 100 to 150 men, space being left in the centre for the white man's tent, with a cooking shed close by. Nor are sanitary arrangements forgotten. Unless a special man is placed in charge, the whole is under the supervision of the chief of the nearest village.

We soon felt the benefit of these permanent covered places, for just as we were about to start onwards from the first of them, a tropical shower enveloped us, and all the loads would have been soaked had not the sheds been at hand. As it was, everything was hurriedly placed under cover, and after only half an hour's delay we were able to leave with everything dry. It repeatedly happened that storms came up just as we were nearing camp, and by dint of hurrying we were often able to get the loads under shelter just in time. The showers were very local, and we could sometimes avoid them. As a rule, there was one big storm each day, but immediately before and directly afterwards the weather would be glorious. There were no half measures: it was either storm or sunshine in real earnest. The atmospheric effects were most beautiful. Once, I remember, the clouds concentrated over us like a roof, with blue sky beyond, and in the distance the hills could be seen, bathed in sunshine, with a silver stream glistening at their base.

As we neared Bukoba the natives appeared to be in better circumstances, and were more clothed. At a village called Nyakaangiva I was welcomed



by the Sultan Chobya, who was quite a dandy in his way. He wore a white drapery fastened round his waist and hanging to his feet like a skirt; over that was a bright Reckitt's blue tail-coat with gold buttons, and no doubt he thought he was in correct costume to do the honours. I was very sorry to be leaving the entirely unsophisticated children of nature, as they were infinitely more interesting than those who were neither "fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring."

Many presents were brought to me, and I personally superintended the division of the bananas among the men, much to the amusement of the chief and his followers, who sat round on chairs to watch. Mike and the *capitao*, with one or two assistants, made as many heaps of fruit as there were men, and I saw that the portions were about equal. This being done, I took a spear and pointed it at random toward the porters standing round, as I did so each was obliged to take the lot next in rotation, and not, as some wished, to pick out what they thought to be the biggest. Thus every one was satisfied, and there were no bickerings.

This was rather an isolated though splendidly situated camp, with the thickly wooded "everlasting hills" all around. Chobya's village was too far away for me to visit that evening, so I sent word to say that I would call as I passed the next morning. He promised to send me over a few of his people to help my carriers, and this

offer I gladly accepted, as the last few days had tried the porters severely. Their feet were badly cut by the stones, and torn to pieces by the thorns, which had proved a severe trial to all. In some parts the thorn bushes and trees were very dense, so that the men walked like cats on hot bricks, picking their way so gingerly that it took four times longer than usual to cover the ground; but their care was not surprising, for the thorns were not like those of the comparatively harmless English bramble, but sharp woody spines, many of them 3 inches in length.

The next morning I despatched all the loads, and at seven was on my way to visit the Sultan. In about an hour he and a number of his followers met me at the entrance of his domain. I had only intended to stay a few moments, and then get on, but he would not hear of it, and conducted me beyond the zareba, to a very large, clean room, or hall, with mud walls and thatched roof supported by two trees in the centre. The floor was covered with fine, clean straw, and the atmosphere was pleasantly warmed. This I found was achieved by lighting a wood fire on the floor, in the middle of the room, and when the air was warm enough, the glowing wood was removed, and the warm grey ash spread under the straw.

The room was crowded with men sitting on the ground. There were two chairs—one for myself, and one for the chief. To be perched on a seat, looking down upon people on the floor gives one

a very superior feeling. After a short chat, consisting of a few polite remarks exchanged through the interpreters, I visited the womenfolk in the back premises, but as they were not at all interesting I soon returned to the reception-room, and found that an entertainment, got up in my honour, was in full swing.

There was a small semicircle of men with large drums shaped like half an egg, which they placed between their knees, and grasping them tightly at the sides with the palms of their hands to get sufficient purchase, they played the tunes with their fingers.

Two small boys danced, accompanied by the music, and the weird movements of three women, who wriggled their heads and necks after the manner usually adopted at native dances. The boys had eight little fruit husks about the size of a walnut containing a few stones, tied together, and fastened to their knees or the side of their ankles with strips of banana leaf. At every motion these quaint little bells would jingle, and the onlookers crooned a low, soft, murmuring chorus, while they gently swayed their bodies backwards and forwards, helping to produce the drowsy Oriental feeling which pervaded the room.

Notwithstanding the early hour of the morning, the beer of the country was freely circulated in gourds of every shape and size, and most of the men were smoking a sort of hubble-bubble. My porters had not come that way, so they missed the

fun, but all my machila men crowded round the door, and thoroughly enjoyed it, as indeed I did too, and would have been very glad to stay longer had I not felt I must be getting on.

When I rose to go, the whole party stood up, and headed by their chief—who, by the by, had changed the blue coat for a white one—escorted me to the entrance. I felt a little shy about tipping him, but Mike assured me he would not be in the least offended, so I gave him two rupees (2s. 8d.), which he accepted without hesitation, in fact seemed quite delighted. He had the previous day presented me with twenty bunches of bananas, a sheep, two chickens, and some milk.

Nyakaangiva, Chobya's village, was situated on an elevation, and to regain the main road we had to descend by a very steep, rugged way; but the fresh men supported me bravely, and we arrived at the bottom in safety.

When we were on the beaten track once more the country became quite green and pastoral again. I consider the scenery we passed through between Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza far finer and more varied than that seen from the Stevenson road on the Nyika Plateau. I believe the usual caravan route between, Udjidji or Usumbora, and Mwanza on Victoria Nyanza is decidedly commonplace, so I congratulated myself that circumstances had forced me to take the wilder if more difficult route.

If one is fairly lucky in escaping the storms, T

think the period of the "small rains" the best for travelling, for when the sun is absolutely unclouded the heat is terrific, even by 9 a.m.

Shortly after leaving Nyakaangiva I saw indications of a coming storm, so I rushed the men on, and we were just in time to gain shelter for ourselves and baggage. Now that we were on a good road with rest-houses all the way, I felt the worst was over. It was marvellous how well the whole caravan had kept together. From the commencement I adopted the plan of making the *capitao* bring to me without delay any man who evinced the least sign of failing. Most of their little ailments were easily put right if taken in time. It was comic to see them marshalled up by the headman, all with faces as long as a kite, and, as I interviewed them, each indicated the seat of trouble by placing his hand on his head, stomach, or wherever he thought it was. Mike would stand near to translate the simple questions I asked them. I then gave the remedy I considered best, and am happy to say it was in all cases efficacious.

It was only during the last few days that I had two men wholly incapacitated, and they were not seriously ill. By that time we had considerably less to carry, as we had eaten the contents of one chop (food) box, and distributed a quantity of salt and beads over the country, so I could well afford to relieve them of their loads, and allow them to follow on slowly.

~~We~~ had just hurried under shelter when the

storm came on, and I found myself crowded into a shed with about a dozen of the men and the little Commander-in-Chief. We were compelled to remain there at least an hour, and while waiting, one unhappy carrier showed me his torn and bleeding toe. Luckily I happened to have with me my medicine chest, in the shape of a sponge-bag, and among the simple contents were some ointment and an old, soft handkerchief. So I bound up the toe, and had no sooner finished than another was forthcoming. The news that wounds were being attended to, was soon circulated, and maimed feet were thrust towards me from all sides. I and the "Commander-in-Chief" were kept busy with them until the rag was exhausted, though we used it as sparingly as possible, and made them supplement it with bits of banana leaf, or anything else they had. It was funny to see them afterwards hopping about the wet ground trying to keep the bandages dry.

Once or twice during the journey I had to talk very seriously with the men. For instance I found them one afternoon sitting about the camp looking very glum, and on inquiring the meaning of the general depression, I found that they had had no food, as they considered it too dear in that neighbourhood, and declared they could not afford to buy it.

I felt they must not go on short commons after working so hard, so I reminded them of the "poso" allowance they had received regularly all the time, and pointed out to them how little they had been obliged to spend hitherto, having had

such plentiful supplies from the presents brought to me. I told them I was surprised that now, simply because things were a trifle dearer and presents not so plentiful, they were so foolish as to go without food. I assured them that if I did not eat I should certainly be ill, and so would they; and I finished by saying, "Till now if any of you have been ill, I have been pleased to let you off your work until you were better, but if you do not eat to-night and are ill to-morrow, it will be entirely your own fault, and I shall knock off a day's pay from every man who cannot carry his load."

I am glad to say that the justice of my argument came home to them. I saw a smile flit across the faces of one or two of the leading spirits, and knew I had won the day. They roused themselves from their gloom and said they would go at once and get some provender. It only requires a little tact and firmness to manage these overgrown children.

Since we left the boundary river, the Walundi had given place to the Luanda tribe. The women seemed much more emancipated, and instead of remaining near their village or hut until I went to them, they came forward and crowded round the tent. They wore a quaint style of dress made of dried banana stalks, which hung from the waist in hundreds of strips, giving the appearance of an accordion-pleated skirt. Two of them sat on the ground the whole afternoon at my tent door, gazing in wonder at everything I did. My sateen dress, which had done good service, and consequently was

not as fresh as it might have been, was nevertheless much admired, especially the three little flounces round the skirt. Every now and then I found one or the other stealthily putting out a hand to feel the material. They had never seen any faced cloth before ; all they knew was the ordinary trade blue or white calico with a dull surface.

The next day we entered an avenue of metawa trees, which continued almost without interruption as far as Bukoba. Planting these trees is an excellent idea of the Government, as they make the high-road between their two important stations on the Victoria Nyanza—Mwanza and Bukoba—very pleasant. The surface of the road was soft to the men's feet, which they thoroughly appreciated after the rough experience of the last few days. We were now almost at our journey's end, and on reaching camp I gave them their "poso" for the last time.

In calculating at Usumbora what quantity of beads and salt I should require, no allowance was made for any delay, and had any detention occurred I should have become insolvent. As it was, I had to eke out what salt and beads remained by a few bundles of pice (an Indian coin equal to about a halfpenny). Fortunately I had brought a few hundred of these, done up in rolls of twenty-five, but even they would have been of little use had we not been so near a large settlement.

I tried to get a little writing done here, but it was perfectly hopeless. The people were numerous, and each individual made some excuse to interrupt.



me. Men sauntered up to the tent, touched their hats, or rather their heads, and said "Jumbo" (good-day), and then stood and stared their hardest. The women came and sat at my feet, and conversation ensued with one of them somewhat in this style.

She began with what sounded like, "Chere cura cara mene bo."

I was not going to let her think that the white woman could not talk, so I answered, "Yes! Certainly; I have never doubted it."

Then she made another remark, and I replied, "Very likely; but then, you see, it has never been put to me in quite that way before." And so we went on, until we both realised the absurdity of the situation, and burst out laughing.

The Sultan's headman was almost inside the tent, lost in admiration of my writing capabilities, and children were scampering about, looking very jolly in their bead and shell attire; but they were shy of me, and beat a hasty retreat when I turned in their direction.

The previous day we had skirted the north end of Lake Ikimba, which, as far as I could see, was fast becoming, like all the other rivers and lakes, a vast papyrus swamp. It was surrounded by park-like country, with a range of hills to the east, round which we had to work our way to reach Kanazi. About two hours before we got there, at a turn of the road, our first view of Victoria Nyanza burst upon us. The men grew very excited, and ran on

shouting and dancing, and my own joy was so great that I felt very much inclined to get out of the machila and join them.

After forging our way across the plateau for a whole month, surrounded by dangers known and unknown, to be at last within sight of our goal was almost too much for us all. The sense of immense relief at the consummation of my wishes, made me realize how tense my feelings must have been all the time.

When we arrived at Kanazi I found there was a very good house for white people, and I was told the Commandant of the district always occupied it when he passed that way, so I felt I was safe in doing the same. The previous night had therefore been my last for some time in a tent, and I could not have believed how attached I should become to my portable home. Nevertheless, I found it very delightful to have two rooms, in any part of which I could stand erect.

In the afternoon I sat outside on the verandah, which was raised a few feet from the ground, and I was soon beset by a small crowd below, making loud personal remarks in an unknown tongue. At one time they concentrated their attention on some part of me under the table, so I just lifted my dress and let them see my high laced mosquito boots. And then, much to their amusement, I mimicked the way they had looked me up and down. The intricacies of European dress were a source of never-failing interest to the native. Once, on the

plateau, I felt rather cold, and put on some gloves—about the only time I wore them—and the men could not understand them at all. I had to take them off and on several times for them to see how I did it.

The camp yard at Kanazi was a scene of great activity that day. My own poor men were very tired and quiet, but there was another set of porters with Government loads, in charge of some askari, making a good deal of noise, and I felt as if I were back in the every-day noisy world again.

The *capitao* of the village sent in not only a goat, some milk, eggs, and good bananas, but also a lettuce, some spring onions, and a cabbage. I had almost forgotten the taste of such luxuries!

Kanazi is beautifully situated on a small bay, and has a glorious view across the deep blue lake. Islands, both small and large, occur here and there, and cast their reflections in the water. They are probably the home of many a feathered family, being densely wooded and intensely green.

It was delightful to sit on the verandah resting, and I lounged there luxuriously, watching some lovely little birds with bright yellow breasts, which were taking a good splashing bath in a pool in the hollow of a stone, and then hopping about preening their gaudy plumage. I longed to tarry awhile amid such charming surroundings, but it was impossible, as I did not know when the steamer would be at Bukoba, and I also had to consider the men, who were anxious to finish their work, get their money, and return home.

When the afternoon grew cool I went to see Sultan Kahigi's house. He was away himself, but his *capitao* took me round. It was a big, rambling place, and like the mansions of most of these chiefs, very sparsely furnished. He was having some additional rooms built for his wives, and meanwhile they were lodged in huts outside. I called upon his sister and two of the young wives, one of whom was dressed in a long green drapery, and the other in yellow. They were sitting under the shelter of their door, and covered their faces when I came near, so I chaffed them in dumb show about it, putting a handkerchief up before my own. They saw the joke at once and soon let the drapery drop. One was decidedly fascinating, with an olive skin, oval face, and beautiful soft eyes; the other was rather more of the negro type.

Mike, as usual, was interpreter, and I asked them, with his aid, if they would come to London with me, and then I pretended to carry one off. She held back, saying, "What will my husband do?" I replied, "Oh, never mind him; I will get you another in London," at which she laughed gaily.

I induced all three to accompany me a little way, and I made the pretty one link her arm in mine, and so we walked along, to the evident amusement of those around. They all enjoyed the fun, and late that evening, to show their good-will, a plate of butter was brought to me as a present from the ladies.

It always struck me as sad that the women of

that class had so little to do. Intellectually I believe they are capable of better things, but their narrow life affords no scope for any mental effort.

The next morning we fell into marching order for the last time. We continued by the lake-side for a few miles ; then lost sight of it for a while, and presently regaining it, we followed its shore all the way to Bukoba. In the morning light it looked, if possible, more lovely than it did overnight, and I was sorry it was too early for a snap-shot. With the help of seven or eight additional men we sped rapidly along. I had been trying to encourage my own drooping men by reminding them of the rupees awaiting them at Bukoba, and to-day, as they sang their songs, I introduced the refrain of " Bukoba-a-a-aa, Rupee-a-a-aa," which they took up with spirit.

We passed a good many people on the way—a fact which goaded the men to keep up a good appearance. These porters have a great deal of *amour propre*, and although they were just about at their last gasp, they pulled themselves together wonderfully for a final effort, and assumed a most jovial manner.

During the month they had been in my service we had traversed the districts of Arundi, Kyasa, Ruanda, Karagwe, and Kianga, and had covered over 300 miles of country described by Mr. Lionel Declé as "most difficult and trying, consisting of a tangled mass of mountains, many of the intervening valleys being only a few hundred

feet wide." In that summary he does not include the tremendous difficulties of crossing the papyrus swamps or rivers.

I shall not easily forget the morning we approached Bukoba. Naturally we were all very excited, and there was much to interest us at every turn. On one side was the glorious lake, and on the other the large, well-cultivated estates of rich natives, between which were sandwiched pathways that reminded me of pretty country lanes at home, until I looked up and caught sight of the banana leaves above the high fence.

Suddenly I noticed all my men looking in the direction of the lake, and turning my head, I espied a small steamer making for Bukoba. I wondered if it could possibly be on its way to Entebbe, and if so, whether it would give me time to pay off my retinue and settle other necessary matters. I therefore urged the porters to put on a spurt, and we soon saw the little settlement of Bukoba basking in the sunshine beneath us. I knew then I was once more in touch with civilisation. We descended the hill rapidly, and I was borne through the main entrance of the Boma, and deposited at the gate of the inner court, which was guarded by a sentry.

It was Sunday morning, November 5th, and although Sunday is much the same as any other day, except for the fact that the German officials do not work, there was a feeling of calmness about the place which I liked.

The Commandant received me very kindly, and told me that the little boat I had seen was not the one I wanted, but their own little pinnace from Mwanza. The railway boat was not expected for another nine or ten days. He courteously placed a vacant room at my disposal, and assured me I was very welcome.

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## CHAPTER XIX

### BUKOBÄ

Bukoba—Beautiful situation—The Boma—Tip porters with a bullock—Carnivorous tendencies—Pay the men—Enjoy decent food again—African clock—Sunset on the lake—Visit Sultan Kahigi—His Court—Askari fitted out—Meditation by the lake—The boat due—It arrives—Farewell dinner—Regretful departure

**B**UKOBÄ has expanded to its present proportions round the nucleus left by Emin Pasha. It is on the west side of Victoria Nyanza, almost on the equator, and is the frontier station of German East Africa and Uganda. It lies in a hollow between rather rocky hills, and when I had mentally substituted for the grass-covered huts, a few fishermen's cottages, it recalled to my mind a little bay on the Yorkshire coast.

Like all the German stations, it is well laid out, and the present Commandant takes great pride in its progress and improvements. He has enlarged the boundary wall round the Boma, and had just completed building a charming little house for himself, or successors. From the upper verandah he can scan the beautiful lake for miles, and obtain a good view of it in all its varying moods. It is



a glorious outlook, and lucky are the officers who are appointed to this station. There is no occasion for a six weeks' tramp overland for themselves or their mail, as is the case with many stations. There is a 'monthly service of steamers to Port Florence, on the opposite side of the lake, whence a train conveys them in less than two days to Mombasa, where they find one of their own liners to carry them home to the Fatherland.

The house in which I was staying is the oldest Boma in the country. It is very picturesque, with a thatched roof overhanging so far that I had to duck my head when I got to the top step; but I think Emin Pasha erred when he planned the best rooms to overlook the courtyard instead of the lake. The officers now in command have made the interior very comfortable. A sitting-room has been divided off at one end of the long mess-room by tastefully arranged draperies, and furnished with the usual deck-chairs. A harmonium stands on one side of the other division, and a portrait of the Kaiser, which is a prominent feature in every German Boma, adorns one of the walls. And of course they have a gramophone, which nightly enabled us to visit in fancy the opera and music-halls of Berlin. The windows they considered their *chef d'œuvre*, and certainly they were very ingenious. They were made of old half-plate glass negatives, cleaned and set, some vertically, some horizontally, in thick wooden moulding, giving the effect of windows in some quaint old castle.

Connected with the Government were three officers, who joined the mess, and two non-commissioned officers. Outside the Boma, in different capacities—such as a boat agent and traders—were an additional three or four white men. There was a large coloured population, and a number of very good stores, mostly in the hands of Indians, so there would be no difficulty in procuring provisions if a caravan were starting inland from Bukoba.

I was shown over the well-fitted hospital, in which the doctor has a large room with a splendid light, where he can pursue his interesting researches into the cause of sleeping sickness, tick fever, and other tropical diseases.

To return to the Sunday I arrived. I talked over the situation with the Commandant, and discussed the question of proceeding by caravan route, but he told me it would take nine days to go to Entebbe overland, and after all I had gone through, I did not feel inclined to undertake it, especially as he invited me most warmly to stay.

The next steamer was scheduled for the south route, but as I wanted to see the lake, that was no real drawback, and I decided to await it.

My men that day, like B'rer Fox, "lay low," but they were very much "on the spot" the next morning, when I had promised they should have a bullock as a tip, for behaving so well on safari.

I had been advised to let Mike and John return





SOME OF MY PORTERS



GRASS DRESSES, BUKOBA

across the plateau with the porters, as it would be safer for them than travelling alone, so all that day we were very busy in various ways. Boxes and bundles had to be rearranged, and household washing done, then as I felt responsible for the tent on its way back to the kind lender, that had to be packed securely, not only to preserve it, but to prevent it being used on the journey. I also had letters to write, which I wished Mike to leave at the different places we had touched at, so when the paymaster came and asked me to come out and inspect the bullock, as it was too wild to be brought into the yard, I felt I had not the time to spare.

I heard afterwards that the men could not possibly kill it, and that finally it was shot by an askari, who divided it among them, and, according to the report of an eye-witness, each man grabbed his share with avidity, and there and then devoured it with such gulosity that, in less than half an hour after its death, only the hoofs remained. I must confess my surprise at hearing this, as during the march the few men who had eaten meat were most particular in cooking it. It was fortunate for my peace of mind that I did not discover these carnivorous tendencies sooner, although I rather regretted not having seen the savage orgy.

The following morning I made the men file past me, and handed to each the promised rupees. It was good to see their faces light up with pleasure at the sight of the money, and I equally enjoyed giving it to them, as I felt it had been honestly

earned. I was very pleased indeed that I could send them back to Usumbora with such a satisfactory report.

They rushed to the market and stores with their newly acquired wealth, and when they returned before starting, they were all gaily attired in either coloured calico or bark cloth, which will serve them for years. Then I had to make final arrangements with Mike and John; the latter had been a very good boy, but Mike had been decidedly trying at times, although he was really most capable and spoke English fairly well.

When they had all departed, I felt a great weight had been lifted from my mind, and that once more I was free for a while from the turmoil and worry of a caravan.

The household economy of the Bukoba Boma was excellent; the servants had been well trained, and everything worked smoothly. After my deprivations across the plateau—chiefly owing to an inferior cook—the food now placed before me seemed fit for the gods, and it will be a very long time before I forget the delicious flavour of the well-made rolls and butter. It was a revelation to me to find how delectable such simple fare could be.

The mineral waters which I got here were also a great treat. They are made at Mwanza, so that there was an unlimited supply—a great boon in a thirsty land.

I am afraid that in civilised countries we too often

take for granted the good things of life, and by never knowing the lack of them, miss half the pleasure they can give.

All the Government officials wear white duck uniforms, and the boys have been taught to get them up splendidly. One day I watched one of them ironing, and I was much interested in his method of damping the clothes. Instead of sprinkling them with his hand, he filled his mouth with water and very cleverly squirted it over the garment.

All the German stations I visited are under military control, but the entire work of the district—unless there is a rising—is purely civilian, so that the staff have little scope for their military abilities. It is more necessary for the Commandant to be an architect, builder, brickmaker, gardener, and judge; and if there does not happen to be a doctor attached to the station he has to undertake medical and dental duties too, as well as the general official work of a Commissioner.

I was fortunate in having a well-fitted dark-room placed at my disposal by the doctor, so I seized the opportunity of developing all the plates I had exposed, which occupied me during the heat of the day.

My way to this room lay through the hospital garden, where a large number of patients were being attended to in the open air by one of the non-commissioned officers or a black assistant. Those suffering from sleeping sickness would lie

about the whole day, doing nothing and looking most miserable and emaciated. The doctor took me to his laboratory, and showed me under the microscope the tsetse fly, which spreads the fatal sickness; also the blood of an infected person. The bacillus resembles a short, fine hair between the corpuscles of the blood.

On my way back again I was amused by the exertions of three men who had been set to cut the grass. They were comfortably seated on the lawn, and each, at his leisure, would take hold of one or two blades at a time and cut them with the corner of an old tin box. In this age of electrical speed, it was a truly refreshing sight.

Africa, or at any rate the Central portion of it, is a country where no idea of the value of time has yet penetrated. Hurry is an unknown quantity, and the sun, without the dial, is the only clock. When I used to inquire of my porters how long it would be before I arrived at a certain camp, they would think a little, and then point to a certain height in the heavens where the sun would be at the time, which was quite near enough for them. The difficulty came when we had to fix an hour before sunrise. White travellers have been known to take a living timepiece, in the shape of a cock, along with them. When we were near a village where there was likely to be any of these feathered chronometers, I used to tell my boys to wake me at either the first or second cock-crow, as I might



happen to wish. These birds crow regularly one hour before the dawn, and again *at* dawn.

Towards evening I usually went out for a little exercise. There were pleasant walks in several directions, my favourite stroll being by a path near the water's edge to the little harbour. This is formed by a tiny bay, on the far side of which they have built a landing-stage and a small custom-house. I always enjoyed coming back just before sunset, when the water assumed the tenderest shade of blue. I well remember one evening seeing the glorious full moon—scarcely giving the sun time to set—glide gently above the horizon, adding its silver light to the ruddy afterglow. It was so entrancing that I felt as if I had been translated to another world, but I was brought back to this by Maffi, who was scampering through the grass, sniffing at all the holes he could find where any animal had been or was likely to go.

Another evening the Commandant took me over the three gardens, which lie between the rocky hills that enclose Bukoba, and a small river which flows into the lake. On our way thither we passed a great number of trees which he had planted on his arrival, and in the four years which had elapsed since then, they had grown to quite a respectable size. In two of the gardens grow various kinds of fruit and vegetables, such as peas, beans, cucumbers, potatoes, pineapples, strawberries, and passion fruit; the shrub of the latter was trained up trellis-work to form divisions in the gardens. The third is an

experimental department, where they have planted European fruits, such as pears, apples, &c., but there has not yet been time for any results.

On Sunday afternoon I paid a formal call on the Sultan Kahigi. Over each of the five districts of Bukoba, there is a Sultan who, so to speak, has his town house in Bukoba. These houses, with the huts for their immediate attendants, stand on an elevation a little removed from the lake. They are enclosed by a high bamboo fence, and form a separate royal village. Kahigi, being the most important chief, has the finest house, situated in the middle of the compound.

It is prettily built of bamboo sticks, tied together with different-coloured fibre, forming a conventional pattern, and great taste has been displayed with good effect.

The four other houses, each in a corner, are smaller and less ornate.

Kahigi is a fine, well-proportioned man, standing over 6 feet in height. He was dressed in white shooting breeches, high boots, tweed Norfolk jacket, and soft felt hat. He met us at the outer entrance, and led us into his "reception-room," the floor of which was occupied by crowds of squatting retainers, all smoking and drinking pombé. At one side of the room were two or three chairs for our use, and a table on which were some photographs, among them one of the Kaiser. The walls were decorated with a few unframed pictures from magazines.

Through two open doors, opposite each other,

passed a continuous stream of people carrying a variety of burdens, including barrels of water and native beer ; and even a horse was led through.

The Commandant carried on most of the conversation, and a few remarks of mine were translated to our host. Then the Court visit ended. Kahigi professes to be very loyal, and I hope he will prove so, should there be trouble with the natives, which at that time seemed imminent. When the pinnacle came the previous Sunday in great haste from Mwanza, asking for twenty askari at once, and for two hundred more to be sent overland as soon as possible, he had certainly been very prompt in helping to get the men together. From the window of my room in the Boma I had been much entertained, seeing the uniforms distributed to the recruits.

They all filed into the courtyard, and were placed in rows ; then each in turn went to the white officer and received a bundle of clothes, with which he retired to the back of the crowd and immediately commenced operations by dragging the trousers over anything he happened to have on. The transformation was truly comic. They entered the compound in all kinds of loose, flowing garments, and after a few minutes left in full rig-out of khaki breeches and jacket, grey stockings, black boots, and bright red sash and fez. No doubt in this attire they felt equal to cutting a great dash.

The following day they were again marshalled in the courtyard, and each was presented with a rifle,

and after that they began their march to Mwanza, which would probably occupy about a fortnight. On leaving, their band struck up a few bars of a tune, which seemed to be all they knew of it, but, nothing daunted, they played them over and over again, noise seeming to be the great desideratum. The crowd which invariably follows soldiers of any nationality accompanied them admiringly for some distance.

Whenever I went in the direction of the market, or left the Boma at all, I attracted a good many wondering spectators, but a conversation carried on purely by signs is apt to become tedious, so when I had had enough of their company I used to wave them away, and wander down to the lake alone. It was always pleasant to sit on one of the silvery dunes and watch the people as they came to fill their pitchers, and at the same time take their evening bath. I was much interested in one woman who stood in her piece of blue cloth, with the waves beating against her, while she washed her head and arms. I wondered if she intended to walk home in her wet garment, but no—she came out of the water, put on a clean, dry cloth, and let the wet one slip down underneath. Then she stood at the water's edge and washed the discarded piece, which I presumed would, in its turn, become the clean garment of the morrow. She then placed a pitcher of water on her head and wended her homeward way, clean and refreshed.

A little later some small boys came down, and

floundered about in the water to their entire satisfaction, and as I watched the different people come and go I pondered on the simplicity of their needs: a little water, a little flour, a little meat—when they were in luck—a few reeds, a little thatch, perhaps a little cloth, and they were passing rich.

“ I tore myself away from the lake with reluctance, and felt sorry that the days were so short. There is no twilight, and the instant the sun sets it is dark.

The Commandant used to ride about the station on a smart, sturdy little zebra, which was so strong and well-suited to the country, that it seems a thousand pities such a useful “ mount ” is not more general. It was pleasant to notice that a very friendly feeling seemed to exist between the officials and the natives, doubtless owing to the fact that the Sultan Kahigi's sympathies lean towards the Government, and the natives take their cue from him. Every evening, after the house boys had finished their work, they came, one by one, to say good-night, each standing by the door, bowing in his own particular style, one with a very jerky nod of the head, another almost falling on his face, while a third would make his obeisance in the most irreproachable style. The Commandant never shirked his part of the performance, but inclined his head and said good-night to each in a friendly tone.

The days had passed so rapidly that I was astonished when I was told that we might expect the boat at any moment, and on Tuesday, November

14th, the boys, who are quick at sighting anything, reported that it was coming. On looking in the direction indicated I could just see some smoke rising above the horizon to the north, and presently a speck became visible, which soon developed into a very fine steamer. After the months of hopeless delay and unpunctuality, which made all pre-arrangement of time impossible, I was amazed to find myself in a country where things were actually done in accordance with a time-table. The steamer, I found, was to anchor in the bay for the night and leave again the following day.

As we found in the morning that it would be past midnight before the steamer left, I decided to have my goods and chattels put on board by daylight, and the Commandant said he would send up the "Chatelaine," as he called the string of twelve prisoners in chains, to take my baggage down to the pier, whence we embarked in the Government boat, and were put off to the ss. *Winifred*. The Commandant, however, would not hear of my remaining on board. He insisted that I should return to the shore and take my farewell dinner at the Boma in the evening, after which it would be quite soon enough for me to take up my quarters on the steamer. In the meantime, he suggested we should pay a visit to an island, about 4 miles from the shore, where the natives bury their dead.

We were joined in this expedition by the *Winifred's* only passenger, and were almost there when some very heavy clouds appeared over the hills,

followed by a few spots of rain. The men suggested turning back, and I was not loath to do so, for I knew that the African lakes, though smilingly sweet and gentle when in a fascinating mood, could become, when ruffled, just the reverse. So we all agreed to return to the shore, and on our way up to the Boma we met the Sultan, Kahigi. He had heard that my baggage had been put on board, and thinking I was starting at once, he was hurrying down to the shore to bid me farewell. He brought me a present from his pretty little wife at Kisaka, consisting of a beautiful piece of wickerwork, which he said she had made herself. He turned back and walked along with us, and immediately we Europeans sank into insignificance beside the great chief, who was saluted on all sides by his devoted people.

To fill up the time before dinner we strolled round the garden, and I took a regretful last look at its beauties. Then we sat and rested on the Commandant's verandah, watching the changing shadows on the lake, and the steamer that was so soon to bear me away from this enchanting spot.

We were regaled that evening with a *recherché* dinner, in which we were joined by the passenger who had come up from Mombasa, and who was consequently able to retail to us all the news of the—I was going to say larger, but on second thoughts will call it the more crowded—world beyond.

It is astonishing how soon one becomes attached to people and places, and after spending ten days at Bukoba, it was with genuine regret that I left it, and said goodbye to the kind and friendly officials.



## CHAPTER XX

### VICTORIA NYANZA

Cockroach hunt—Inspect the vessel—Arrive Mwanza—Rather unsettled—A floating island—Invitation from the Commandant—A picnic—Recent frustrated rising disorganises labour—Fresh passengers—Lion cubs—Leave Mwanza—English territory once more—Port Florence

**I**T was rather late when I went on board, but that did not deter me from having a regular turn-out of my cabin, and I discovered several huge cockroaches in possession of my bed. I insisted upon their eviction, and saw that capital punishment was inflicted on all those caught. The mosquito net was then well tucked in, and I tried not to think of the possibility of intruders creeping under it during the night.

Notwithstanding the drawbacks I slept soundly, and woke up to find that we were already well on our way. After breakfast I had a good look round the boat, and found it a perfect miniature liner of 600 tons, with six cabins—two double and one single on each side; also two bath-rooms with white enamelled baths. It is not easy to over-estimate the value of these to passengers coming on

board after the long, hot, and dusty railway journey from the coast. I was told by a man whose business takes him frequently backwards and forwards, that he once arrived with several other passengers, all so clamorous for a bath that they were obliged to toss for turns.

The cabins are well furnished and fitted with electric light and fans. The saloon runs across the after-part of the boat, and has table accommodation for twelve. At least eight or nine men could sleep comfortably in it at a pinch, but this would only be likely to occur for the one night between Port Florence and Entebbe. The promenade deck is fitted with wooden seats and a good awning.

Surrounded by all this comfort, it was difficult to realise that we were steaming along on a lake, in the heart of Africa, nearly 4,000 feet above the sea-level. The proportions of Victoria Nyanza are quite different from either Nyasa or Tanganyika, both these being comparatively long and narrow, while the former is nearly square, its greatest length and width being 270 and 225 miles respectively. Taken as a whole, the scenery quite equals that of the others. The shores are wooded to the water's edge, and although the equator crosses the northern end, everything looks greener than further south.

We anchored just outside Mwanza shortly before 3 p.m., so that, as we had started about five in the morning, it was a run of 10 hours from Bukoba.

## MWANZA

Mwanza is picturesquely situated on a bay which is outlined by a rocky and jagged coast, with rough, stony promontories. As we were likely to be detained for some days, I did not hurry to go ashore, but sat lazily watching what was going on around the boat. A lighter came alongside and commenced at once to take off the cargo, which was trifling compared to the amount we had to take on, in the shape of ground-nuts, skins, and such like, which had been brought from as far south as Tabora.

The business of the settlement has increased enormously since the inauguration of the steamboat service. The captain told me, that in 1902 the average was about 35 tons a trip, whereas in 1906 he was taking hundreds of tons every time—in fact, there was always more than he could find room for. Before we started onwards, even the centre of the deck was stacked with skins. The revenue derived from custom dues in a few years has risen from 22 to upwards of 12,000 rupees annually. The railway (Government) had two sister ships plying on Victoria Nyanza when I was there—the *Winifred* and the *Sybil*—each of which cost £45,000. Since then a still finer vessel, called the *Clement Hill*, has been added to the fleet. I saw the plans of it, which showed that it would be 220 feet long by 32 feet wide, and 10 feet deep. Cabins for sixteen first-class passengers were

arranged for, besides a saloon and smoking-room, and in addition, good second-class accommodation was provided, which the other boats lacked.

I was very fairly comfortable on the *Winifred*, but in my opinion efficient stewards might with advantage replace the dirty Goanese. The catering also left much to be desired, which is a pity, as it is a matter which could so easily be rectified. To me personally, after so many months in the interior, the food provided on the boat seemed positively luxurious, but from the point of view of possible tourists direct from Europe—and there is no reason why there should not be many in the future—the impression given would be quite the contrary. The approach to the eastern side of the lake is quite simple from the coast, with no hardships whatever to be endured *en route*.

From the various people who came on board at Mwanza, including some of the officers, we learned a good deal about the late rising, which had necessitated the call for soldiers from Bukoba. The Mwanza Commandant it appeared, only by chance became aware that there was a great gathering at the neighbouring Sultan's, and on inquiry it proved that they were meditating a surprise visit to the Boma, instead of which the Boma surprised them, and there was a pitched battle a few miles from the station. About twenty-five blacks were killed, but unfortunately the Sultan escaped. Had they not been routed, matters might have become very serious, as there were difficulties with

the soldiers, who, being drafted from neighbouring tribes, very naturally refused to fire upon their own people. The Commandant, however, took prompt measures with them. They were paraded the next morning, and given orders to embark at once on the *Sybil*, which chanced to be in port at the time, and before they realised it they were on their way to Dar-es-salaam. The men I had seen donning their khaki uniforms at Bukoba had not yet arrived, but were still marching on their way to Mwanza to replace the others who had been sent away on the *Sybil*.

Everything was still in a very disorganised and unsettled state, and there was a disquieting feeling of unrest in the air. The Boma was surrounded by barbed wire, and no one ventured far from the village. Owing to this uncertain state of affairs I did not often go ashore, but sat lounging on the deck, dozing or reading the English papers lent to me by the captain. These were a great treat, as I had not seen any for months. When I was seized with a desire to write, I had a table brought, and did so comfortably under the awning, gathering inspiration from the beauties of nature around me.

On coming up from the saloon one day I was much astonished to find a floating island had taken up its position quite close to the steamer. I felt sorry I had not seen it come, but determined to watch it depart. However, it was too quick for me; I only left the deck for a short time, and

on my return it had drifted to the side of the bay.

These floating islands are quite a feature of the lake, and before we got to Port Florence we saw several moving in different directions.

One morning I received an invitation from the Commandant to go ashore. We lay so close to the pier that, as I left the steamer at the appointed time, I could see him waiting to receive me, but before I could land he had been called away on urgent business. One or two young *Leutnants* waited for me, and took me to the open space in front of the Bismarck Monument, where a table was spread with all kinds of light refreshments, and prettily decorated with roses and other flowers. It all looked charming; but soon ominous sounds as if of sand dropping on the leaves proclaimed a coming shower. Fortunately there were plenty of banana trees near, and we each selected the biggest we could find, which afforded excellent shelter. When the rain was over we returned to the table, over which the boys had very thoughtfully placed a banana leaf, which entirely covered it.

Three or four little coloured lads, all under ten, who had been provided by some of the officers with complete askari uniforms, were playing round us all the time. They were very proud of themselves, and saluted me in correct military style. Children are children all the world over, and love to play at soldiers.

After a time the Commandant was seen coming





A NATIVE BAND



MAKING DRUMS



down the avenue to join us, but before he could reach us he was waylaid by some White Fathers, to whom he had to give his time and attention, so that, after all, I never had the pleasure of making his acquaintance.

.. The Boma is situated on a hill, and looks rather an important structure; but for some reason—perhaps the distance from the settlement—it is deserted, the men preferring inferior quarters nearer to their work.

Mwanza is in reality a much larger place than it appears from the water. The main street, a fine, wide thoroughfare, lined on both sides with shops kept by Indian and Arab traders, leads directly from the lake towards the hills. The stores display a medley of wares—beads, copper wire, tawdry ornaments, European clothing, prints, and draperies. There are also plenty of drinking saloons.

An open square near the soldiers' quarters answers the purpose of a village green. The more energetic natives may be seen kicking about a ball, and fondly imagining they are playing "footer," but I am sure their version of the game would puzzle an Association referee. Others, and they are the majority, have solved the problem of how to live with the least possible exertion, and squat about, merely existing.

The German officers have a good skittle-alley, but, of late they had not had much leisure for play.

Fever is very prevalent in the district, and

the hospital was full of patients, who are well cared for.

Owing to the recent disturbances a great many natives had fled, so that labour was difficult to get, and the loading of the ship proceeded so slowly that we were detained from Thursday evening until the following Wednesday morning, which made it hopeless to think of catching the Friday train. Everything, in fact, was upset by different risings: night traffic on the Uganda Railway had been discontinued owing to the Nandi rising, and in consequence the train from Port Florence was starting some hours in advance of the usual time. The captain knew this, and had wished to leave a day earlier in order to catch it, instead of which we were a day late in getting off.

The one passenger who had travelled up with me remained at Mwanza, but several others joined us. Two White Fathers, one Brother, and two Sisters had come through from South Tanganyika, and although they were such a large party they had had a very anxious time, owing to the unsettled state of the country through which they had to pass. One of the Sisters had been out eleven years, and besides the ordinary fever, she had suffered from the more serious type—blackwater—three times. She was about 38 or 40, and, despite the ravages of climate and sickness, looked pretty still. Each of the party had recovered from blackwater at least once, and were certainly living proofs of what proper nursing and treatment can do. Not

so many years ago recovery from this fever was almost unheard of, but now to die from it is the exception. It is to be hoped that it will not be long ere the united research of the many men, learned in tropical diseases, will bring about the same happy result with regard to that dire malady, sleeping sickness, which is so rife in Uganda, claiming its victims by hundreds.

Besides the *religieux*, there was a young *Leutnant*, who was returning to Germany after a very successful shooting expedition in German East Africa. Lion stories are not appreciated unless they are vastly magnified, so I will say he had seen hundreds. At all events, several had fallen to his gun, and he was taking home three cubs which he had made orphans. It was pretty to see them with the black boy in charge of them. They would purr and rub their heads against his sleeve, and lick him like kittens; but all the same I did not feel very happy when Maffi got too near, and I was glad to notice he himself had his suspicions about them.

Another passenger, who was going to Berlin on urgent business, just managed to catch the boat, and it was lucky for him—as he had been travelling night and day to be in time—that we had not started earlier, which we assuredly should have done had we been ready. He turned out to be a man to whom I had an introduction, and had hoped to meet earlier on my tour. I had anticipated getting a fund of information from him, as his ex-

perience of the country extended over many years, in fact he was the gentleman I have mentioned as being instrumental in getting the little steamer placed on Tanganyika.

We steamed away about 9 a.m. on November 22nd, past a rocky coast with beautiful green hills behind. We only made a short run that day to Ykarave, where we took in a large supply of fuel.

The following morning we started about 5.30 a.m., and were soon in the open part of the lake. The weather was both wet and rough, which made us feel very sorry for ourselves, and we lay about in various stages of discomfort until the afternoon, when we anchored outside Shariti for the night.

Shariti is the last German station on the east side of the lake. We were unable to land on account of the rain, and were not sorry, as it did not look a particularly attractive place. There is only one officer, with two non-commissioned officers, stationed there, and I should think they must have a very dull time.

A little further on we called at Karinga, the frontier station of British East Africa. It is smaller even than Shariti, with only one white man in residence, which I am fully convinced ought never to be the case anywhere in Central Africa.

I had now passed beyond the protecting arm of the German Government, but shall always feel the deepest gratitude for the efficient aid it afforded me.

The beautiful scenery of that portion of German territory which I travelled through, and the kind-

ness and hospitality of all the officers, make the time I spent between Bismarckburg and Bukoba one of the pleasantest sections of my journey.

As we neared Port Florence, on the third day from Mwanza, we passed up a very beautiful channel between floating and stationary islands, some of which were well wooded to the water's edge.



# BRITISH EAST AFRICA

## CHAPTER XXI

### PORT FLORENCE

Receive three months' accumulation of letters—Term Uganda Railway misleading—An early start—Natives in vicinity of line—Night at Nakuru—Big game—The Athi plain—Night at Kiu—Nairobi—English settlers—Naivasha—Visit friends—The ss. *Sybil*

THE small European settlement where the post office is situated stands on a hill, nearly a mile from the wharf—too far for me to go after dark. I had received no correspondence for three months, and was naturally very anxious to get the accumulation which I knew must be waiting for me, so I consulted the pier-master as to what could be done.

He at once telephoned to the office, asking them to send my letters down to me on the boat. My future plans depended entirely upon the news I should hear. I was expecting a letter from H.M. Commissioner of the Uganda Protectorate, to whom I had written asking if it were possible for me to return to England through Uganda, and down the

Nile. Another important factor in the determination of my future movements was the character of the news from home. If this were not good, the remaining portion of my journey would have to be abandoned, and I should hurry to the coast and get back to England by Mombasa.

It was nearly 11 p.m. before the budget of letters arrived. The answer from the Commissioner was that "I might, if I had well considered the matter, undertake the arduous route to the Nile," and as the family news was quite satisfactory, I was not long in deciding to do my best to reach Cairo overland.

At the same time I did not wish to miss seeing the beauties of a railway line unique in the world, and to do this I was obliged to diverge from my direct course, and travel eastward for a while, along the Uganda Railway.

The term "Uganda Railway" is rather misleading, I think, to most people, as the line does not pass through Uganda, but begins and ends in British East Africa, and the journey to Uganda has to be completed by boat, running in connection with the train, across the northern part of Victoria Nyanza.

While I was waiting for my correspondence the gentleman who was in a hurry to get to Berlin was trying to induce the railway authorities to send us on by a "special," as the next passenger train was not due to leave for some days. He returned late, saying they had promised to attach two or three



carriages to the 5.30 luggage train in the morning, so there was no time to be lost.

It was not necessary to take all my camp equipment with me on this little trip, so I had to find some place to store it until I returned, which was no easy matter at midnight; but the captain was very obliging, and promised to arrange for the pier-master to take charge of it. None of us had much sleep that night, for we had to be up at 4 a.m., when we had a difficult job, getting our things together in the dark. The hope of a tip was not sufficient inducement to arouse the lazy Goanese stewards, but the captain kindly put his boy at my service, otherwise I could not have been ready.

By the time I had stowed away the things I was leaving behind in a cabin, day was breaking, and matters were further simplified by the train coming alongside of the wharf, which saved us from having to walk with our luggage to the station.

The two White Sisters and I occupied one compartment, leaving two for the Fathers and the other gentlemen. The two first carriages had their doors at the ends opposite each other, so that we could step from one to the other at will. The coaches were all built with the seats lengthwise, and had two upper berths in each to let down for beds at night. No bedding was provided, but we each had our own pillows and rugs.

The scenery was delightful, but, to tell the truth, we were all rather too tired at first to enjoy it to the full. The grandeur is indescribable, and the vege-

tation superb in its luxuriance. It brought to my mind some of the most beautiful parts of the West Indies. We had to be on the look-out all the time, as every turn of the line opened up some new and glorious prospect of lake or mountain, and ever and anon we dashed into the thickest forest and jungle, where the actual shape of the trees was scarcely discernible, owing to the wealth of floral parasites, the convolvuli and wild laburnum predominating.

We had to be very alert indeed to catch even a passing glimpse of the marvellous wooded ravines, which now and again revealed themselves at right angles to the line.

While the engine was taking in water at one of the stations, we fraternised with some English officers who were camping in the neighbourhood. We were much interested in hearing about the recent Nandi rising, which they had just succeeded in quelling. From the train we had seen native soldiers driving along large herds of cattle which had been captured from the rebellious tribe. The line was still guarded, and trains were prohibited from running at night.

The waits at the stations were never too long for my taste, as I derived endless amusement from the crowds of natives in the vicinity. They were chiefly Masai, who were formerly the most warlike people in East Africa, but have now become the most docile and peaceful. The men are considerably over 6 feet in height, and in maturity proportionately



WAGAYA WARRIORS



NAVIRONDA MEN



• SEEN FROM THE TRAIN



broad and well developed. The skin is of a deep brown tint, and they are not overburdened with fat, but seem to be a mass of bone, muscle, and sinew, which conveys the idea of their being as hard as nails. Their hair is a little longer and rather less frizzy than that of the true negro, and it is often straightened out by being caked with fat, and then tied in thin tails. A short one is generally hanging over the forehead with jingling beads at the end. Their clothing consists chiefly of ornaments; coils of iron or brass chains encircle their loins, necks, and ankles. Some may have a small apron of skin, but it would only be worn by those who live near the line and have come in contact with people who are clad. They may even then get as far as having a few yards of calico for a covering; this is usually placed under the left arm and fastened over the right shoulder, but when they rush from their huts to see the train go by, they are as innocent of clothing as the day they were born.

Bead ornaments are also largely worn, and great taste and ingenuity are displayed in forming the pattern and distributing the colours. Ears afford scope for a great deal of decoration. Ivory, wooden, and bead discs are inserted in them, and one man, whom I noticed particularly, had a series of iron rings in graduated sizes outlining the whole ear, the smaller ones being at the top. The effect was really very good. There were fourteen or fifteen in each ear, so he must have had a sorry time when the holes were pierced.

The Masai warrior is a fine fellow, and I was fortunate in seeing a typical specimen at one of the stations. He wore a huge erection of ostrich feathers, rather like a busby, except that it encased the whole head, only the face being exposed. He carried a long oval shield, large enough to shelter the entire body, made of buffalo or rhinoceros hide, ornamented with a most fantastic design. For arms, he had a short sword and knobkerry fastened to a leather belt, and in his hand he held a long spear. He was full of fun, and assumed the most terrifying attitudes for our benefit, and I felt very thankful that they were only "by request."

We passed numbers of little settlements along the side of the line; the primitive huts of wattle stakes, mud, and skins looked fairly well kept. Every one ran out helter-skelter to see the iron horse with his long tail go by, and it was surprising what a number would emerge from one small dwelling.

#### NAKURU

Our first day's journey came to an end about 6 p.m. at Nakuru, and there was just daylight enough for us to obtain a glimpse of the beautiful lake of that name.

To get to the railway refreshment-room we had to leave the station, and walk through a garden which was gay with flowers of every colour and description. Quite a passable dinner awaited us,

after which we returned to the carriages for the night, and were on the move again by 7 a.m.

For the first half-hour we had a beautiful view over the lake; a white mist was rising from its waters, which added a touch of mystery to the exquisitely wooded mountains in the background. The lake, with its many islands of the brightest hue, was so lovely, that I yearned to watch the mist of morning vanish before the mid-day sun, leaving the atmosphere transparently clear; and later to see the shadows creep over the hills as the glare and heat of noontide gives place to the subdued light and russet tint left by the setting sun.

The scenery the whole day was superb, and the abundance of game in the open country gave it the semblance of the Zoological Gardens let loose.

We saw many varieties of antelope: the Thomsoni, which is small and graceful; the Granti, with its long horns; the wildebeeste, which is a large animal, a cross between the horse and Indian ox or buffalo; and huge herds of hartebeeste and ostriches. Zebras, with their well-marked stripes, are as numerous as sheep in the fields at home, and form a very effective feature in the landscape. They wait until the train is within a few hundred yards of them, and then scamper away to what they consider a safe distance. Some of the animals did not budge an inch at our approach, but would stand in the most brazen-faced manner to see us pass.

Many miles of country along one side of the line are "reserved," and the animals seem to be quite conscious of the law that protects them. Unfortunately, I did not see any giraffes or lions, although there are plenty of both in the vicinity of the line.

The young sportsman, who was travelling with us, used to exercise his three lion cubs at the stations, and led them about on a leash, like dogs. The biggest was quite as large as a collie, and once I really thought he would be unable to hold it in. Poor Maffi had to sleep with them in the luggage van, and I devoutly hoped they would not become suddenly hungry in the night.

Nairobi, where we arrived in the afternoon, was as far as the luggage train was going, so that our further progress was uncertain. However, the station-master there met us with the news that we might proceed on our journey as soon as we had dined. This was very satisfactory for those of my fellow-passengers who were bound for Europe, as it gave them hopes of still being in time to catch the ocean steamer.

I was advised to remain at Nairobi for the night, and go on by the ordinary train in the morning as far as Kiu. By this arrangement I should see the pick of the scenery along the line, and travel the whole extent of my trip by daylight. I would have to sleep as best I could in the waiting-room at Kiu, and return by the ordinary passenger train the following morning.



I decided to take this advice, so before going to the hotel I had to take leave of my kind and congenial travelling companions of the past week. They were very busy with their dinner, but this did not prevent them from offering me the heartiest good wishes and success to my venturesome trip overland. As I left they rose to their feet, and drank as a toast, "Health and good luck to *Tante Mary*."

This title had been bestowed on me one day when I remarked that our party seemed to be all "Fathers," "Brothers," and "Sisters"—and what relationship could I claim? Whereupon it was unanimously agreed that I must be "*Tante Mary*."

Besides several inferior hotels, Nairobi can boast of quite a good one, where I found a clean and comfortable bedroom furnished with all the ordinary appointments. These were luxuries I had not experienced for many months, and—like the rolls and butter at Bukoba—I could thoroughly appreciate them.

The next day I continued my journey for another four hours down the line, accompanied by a young Yorkshireman, who knew the country well, and added to my enjoyment of the scenery, by giving me a great deal of information about the animals and the country through which we were passing. He indicated the points from which I ought to get views of the snow-capped peak of Kilimanjaro, rising to a height of 19,700 feet, but unfortunately there was no chance of seeing it that afternoon

as it was enveloped in cloud, and although my companion said he had never passed before without seeing it, I was destined to miss it both going and returning.

From Nairobi to Kiu the train runs eastward for some 60 miles over the Athi Plain, which forms a striking contrast to the country west of that district. Instead of the virgin forest and tangled undergrowth, perfectly flat country stretches for miles, with only an occasional conical hilltop visible above the encircling horizon.

One portion of the plain is known as "Stony Athi." It is strewn with immense boulders, riddled with holes, which have all the appearance of having been thrown up by some volcanic disturbance. The grass is beautifully thick and green, and I could not help contrasting it, with the arid country I had seen in parts of Australia, and thinking what a much better time the game in British East Africa have than the cattle there!

The station-master at Nairobi had very kindly telephoned to Kiu regarding my accommodation for the night. The station proved to be something like a glorified bathing-machine, divided into three or four compartments, one of which was allotted to me, and when I saw the fit of the door, innocent of fastening, I regretted having left Maffi at Nairobi, as he always inspired me with confidence, and would, at any rate, give me warning of approaching danger.

However, all went well, and I was not disturbed.

The train arrived from the coast soon after six o'clock the next morning, and by mid-day I was back in Nairobi. I had seen such numbers of interesting and uncommon animals on this trip that they alone were amply sufficient to compensate me for the divergence I had made from my route. In addition, I had seen enough to give me a good idea of the diversity and luxuriance of the country traversed by the Uganda Railway. In the centre lies the great Athi Plain, and east and west of it the picturesque country and thick jungle I have already described. The gradients are steep, and if the line were less winding it might be likened to a switchback.

We started at Port Florence at an elevation of 3,650 feet above sea-level, and in nine hours, over a series of ups and downs, attained a height of 7,940 feet at Molo. Four hours more brought us down to Elmenteita, 5,890 feet above the sea, whence we mounted once more to an altitude of 7,340 feet; then declined again to 4,850 feet at the Athi River, from which we made our last ascent to 5,250 feet, after that the line descends by degrees to practically the sea-level at Mombasa.

The railway is a marvellous feat of engineering, and cost £9,000 per mile; but in spite of this enormous outlay it is now paying well.

#### NAIROBI

Nairobi, owing to its position, is probably destined to usurp the present rights of Mombasa, and become

the capital of British East Africa.<sup>1</sup> It stands on a plain in a beautiful highland country at an altitude of 5,430 feet, and is renowned for its salubrious climate and perfect freedom from the mosquito. The uniform temperature is warm, and may be compared to an ideal English summer. March, April, and October are rainy months ; the rest of the year is continuously fine.

Besides being a strong military post, it is the headquarters of the Uganda Railway, which, with its numerous sheds and workshops, forms quite an important depôt. I saw more Europeans on the platform when I arrived, than I had seen together at any one time since I left the steamer at Chinde five months previously.

The settlement has been laid out on spacious lines, and will admit of enormous expansion. A long, wide road from the station bisects the town ; there is no fault to be found with this road in dry weather, but after heavy rain it is almost impassable for pedestrians. I was caught one day in a storm, and had to wade ankle-deep in mud. There was a good deal of riding and driving, and I was delighted to see horses again, but Maffi had never seen any before, and could not understand that he was expected to get out of their way. Consequently I had many blood-curdling experiences, expecting to see him run over at any moment.

Immediately outside the station is a large enclosure containing the tin shanties of the railway

<sup>1</sup> Since writing this it has become so.

employés. On the main road is the Town Hall, the police station, and other public offices; and on either side shops kept by Europeans. The Indians and Arabs have their stores along the streets running at right angles to it. The central road is shaded by eucalyptus trees which, grown from seed, reach a considerable height in three years. The best hotel, which is well managed, is prettily situated more than a mile up this avenue or main road from the station. The private residences, the Barracks, and the Club with its beautiful tennis courts, are built on a hill overlooking the town.

One evening, hoping to get a view of Kilimanjaro, I engaged a ricksha, and went up the hill, through an avenue of young eucalyptus trees and beautiful yellow flowering shrubs called tecoma. On my return I found the way lighted with oil lamps of about one candle-power. From the hill I could see the tin English church and the beginning of a Roman Catholic one, which, like most of the new buildings, is being constructed of stone. Altogether, Nairobi seems to be a very progressive place, and promises to develop by leaps and bounds. It is situated in the centre of a large agricultural district. Lord Delamere, Lord Hindlip, and other wealthy Englishmen have already taken up large tracts of land, which they are utilising in various ways, partly for raising crops, partly for cattle and ostrich farming. It is gratifying, as one passes in the train, to see the results of their endeavours. In a few years a savage country has been converted

into a peaceful and pastoral land. British East Africa is essentially a "white man's country," and seems to call loudly for able-minded and able-bodied young Britishers, above the labouring class, to come and seek a living and a home. I say "above the labouring class," because I do not think the climate will ever allow of much white manual labour.

With the exception of such plants and trees as pertain distinctly to a cold climate, everything that grows in Europe will flourish in the uplands of British East Africa, as well as sub-tropical produce, including coffee, cotton, &c. Nearly all European flowers are seen in great perfection.

During my stay at Nairobi I drove out to the Roman Catholic Mission, and was shown over the grounds by the Irish Father in charge. It had only been established about five years, yet we walked in the garden between guava trees, and geraniums which might almost be called trees. On every side was abundance of flowers, among them the most gorgeous roses, which bloom all the year round.

The coffee plants were simply laden with bright red berries; a large quantity had been gathered, and we saw the women washing them close by the house. The Ramie plant was also pointed out to me: from its fibre a vegetable silk is made, and great results are anticipated when the necessary machinery has been brought out; in fact, some go so far as to call it "the hope of the country."

The Mission is delightfully situated, the garden terminating at a gorge, where there is a picturesque waterfall. Besides the native industrial section there is a boarding-school for white girls of any age, and young boys. Such a school is quite a boon in a country where white children can, and do live.

During my visit to Nairobi I replenished my "chop" boxes in anticipation of being able to continue my peregrinations as far as the Nile. Being on the line of rail, and so near the coast, things were considerably cheaper there, than at any of the other places I had visited in Central Africa. After my late experiences of wild, unexplored country, where the influence of the white man was unknown, it seemed to me that every possible want could be supplied; but probably had I arrived direct from Europe my impressions might have been rather different, and it is quite likely I should have declared it was utterly impossible to get anything one wanted.

The provision shops were really quite up to the mark and well stocked with all necessities for safari. I wanted to get a tent, but it was quite out of the question for the moment, as every single one had been bought up by the Nandi expedition, so I was obliged to wait, and chance what I could get at Entebbe. While I was in touch with the commercial world again, I took the opportunity to procure enough money to take me to Khartoum. It required a little calculation to arrive at the

amount required, but later events proved that I managed to make a good guess.

On December 2nd I retraced my steps and took the train back to Victoria Nyanza. The scenery, which is particularly beautiful between Nairobi and Naivasha, again held me spellbound. I should have liked very much to break my journey at several places along the line; and if so many hundreds—nay, thousands—of miles had not lain before me, I should probably have done so. Naivasha would certainly have been one of the chosen places. The beautiful lake of the same name is fascinating enough to attract any lover of nature: it is a vast expanse of water, 6,000 feet above the sea, in the centre of Masailand. The surface is broken by many islands, the largest being nearly a mile in length. These islets are haunts of many birds — herons, ibises, cranes, flamingoes, ducks, cormorants, and pelicans. The beauty of the whole scene is enhanced by the deep green forest-clad ranges of the Mau, with the volcanic cone of Longonot towards one side.

Seen from the edge of the escarpment, the great Rift Valley, lying several hundred feet beneath, with its level miles of brilliant verdure shimmering as I saw it in the mid-day sun, was in striking contrast to the tangled masses of shady forest from which the train had just emerged. It was a glorious sight, but only one of the very many to be seen on the Uganda Railway, as the train takes its way carefully over viaducts at giddy heights; embraces,



as it were, the hills round which it has to go, or tears with headlong speed over the Athi Plain.

I was sorry that night traffic had been resumed, as I got very little rest owing to the oscillation, and also missed seeing again, which I should so much have enjoyed, the country between Nukuru and Port Florence.

The train ran alongside the boat—this time the *Sybil*—and I was much relieved to find all my belongings on board.

The doctor and his wife and child whom I left at Karonga, had since been transferred to this place, so I hastened to pay them a visit. They were waiting to receive me in their pretty bungalow, and we sat on the verandah with Mary Karonga blissfully cooing in her bassinette beside us. In all directions were entrancing views over the lake, and I could not help congratulating them on the improvement in their surroundings since I had seen them last.

Port Florence was not a large place when I was there, but as it is the terminus of the railway it will doubtless increase in size. The Europeans all live on a hill a little removed from the lake—a much more healthy situation than that of the native village in the hollow, where fever is very prevalent, and has given the place a bad name.

I was enjoying a pleasant chat with my friends, when the whistle of the *Sybil* broke stridently upon our ears, and I had to bid them a hasty farewell.

We left the wharf at 1 p.m. and steamed on

our way until about 6, when we anchored until the early hours of the following morning. The passengers were four in number—two members of the Church Missionary Society, a railway official, and myself.

The *Sybil* had been wrecked a few months previously, and the repairs had only recently been finished. Possibly it was owing to this fact that she was freer from cockroaches than her sister ship, so I had a good night's rest, and woke up to find the water shining in the sun like glass.

We were constantly in sight, either of the mainland, or of some of the innumerable islands which add so much beauty to the lake. The view of Entebbe as we approached it about noon was most prepossessing. We landed on a wild rocky promontory jutting out from the irregular shoreline, which was thickly wooded. Below the Government House on the left, the Botanical Gardens slope to the water's edge; but owing to the tsetse fly's predilection for that kind of location, a great number of the beautiful trees have had to be sacrificed, in order to check as much as possible the increase of these insects, which spread the sleeping sickness. The fear of this disease makes the gardens quite useless as a pleasure resort.

From the vantage ground of the Government House verandah, the view over the lake was exquisite. The water was an azure blue, and one could see to perfection the verdant islands and the charmingly rugged coast.

# UGANDA PROTECTORATE

## CHAPTER XXII

### ENTEBBE

Flourishing condition of French Mission—Procure a tent—Engage ricksha—Kisubi—Sleeping sickness—A long day—Kampala—Namirembe—Mission life—A confirmation—Visit the little King Daudi Chwa—Call on the Katikiro—Sofari again—Ticks troublesome—Lions—Katwe—Making bark cloth

**E**NTEBBE, which lies just a little to the north of the equator, is the capital of the Uganda Protectorate, and enjoys a splendid situation on a narrow promontory between two deep bays of the lake.

It is laid out with wide roads running at right angles to each other, most of them having trees on both sides, which add considerably to the beauty of the place, and afford a grateful shade from the equatorial sun.

The business street is lined with stores of all descriptions, the principal merchants as usual being Indians and Arabs. One, like a certain establishment in Westbourne Grove, provides everything from a baby's bottle to a coffin. It is a busy place,

as people and goods destined for any part of the Protectorate pass through the capital.

The population is very mixed. The local natives are scarcely seen at all, as their village lies behind a hill which rises on one side of the town, and their market is about half a mile along the road to Kampala.

As Entebbe is the seat of Government, there are a goodly number of officials, who are mostly married men and have their wives out with them. There are also missionaries, an English chaplain, doctors, nurses, the curator of the Botanical Gardens, and a few traders, making the entire white population between fifty and sixty. They have a hospital, but at present no English church, although they hope to start building one very soon ; for games there are very good tennis courts and a cricket field. The houses are built, as in most tropical countries, with ample verandahs, and all have gardens with a wealth of vegetation. Roses have been introduced, and flourish marvellously. One evening when I was dining out my attention on entering the house was at once arrested by the profuse display of these beautiful flowers.

Rickshas are in general use, and they made a pleasant change from the machila, as they are not so disorganising to the toilette, and it is possible to go about in them, even to make calls, without feeling the whole time that one's clothes are all in the wrong place.

I visited the French Mission, and had a talk

with the Father Superior, an affable Dutchman, who spoke English fluently. He was astounded when he heard that I had come so far alone, and was curious to know if I had travelled all the way in the hat I was then wearing. I was rather amused at his question, as it so happened I had that afternoon, for the first time for months, discarded my double terai in favour of an ordinary hat, as such was the fashion at Entebbe in the afternoon. He confirmed my own opinion on this point, and said it was not a wise practice to adopt. The sun, he thought, was the most formidable enemy Europeans had to protect themselves against.

The Mission seemed to have a large following. They were enlarging their church, and everything appeared to be in a prosperous condition.

One day the steamer from Bukoba put in, and I heard news that gave me good reason to congratulate myself on having got across German territory just in the nick of time. A Boer passenger, who came ashore for a few hours, told me that he had been to Bukoba, arriving there by the next boat after my departure. He had intended to explore the country with a view to settling there, but was told that the district was now closed to white people for the present, so had to retrace his steps and abandon his plans.

I had a very busy time at Entebbe, making my arrangements for the next caravan journey. I was

still minus a tent, but on making inquiries I was fortunate enough to get a strong, well-made second-hand one. It had a good fly, and I insisted on having a serviceable ground-sheet, as on the last plateau I had suffered a good deal of inconvenience and discomfort through not having one. I did not wish to carry any money with me, so by means of a treasury note I had it forwarded to await me at Gondokoro. I was told I could get as far as Butiaba, on Lake Albert Nyanza, by ricksha, so I decided to try the experiment, and engaged one with a team of four men. I could not get any satisfactory "boys," so trusted that the Church Missionary Society at Namirembe would be able to find me one or two who could speak English.

On December 11th I left Entebbe for the native capital. On the way I visited the French Mission at Kisubi, where the Father, who had heard I was coming, had prepared an excellent little lunch, after which I was shown all over the buildings and grounds. Their time, attention, and means are now chiefly devoted to relieving the distress and suffering of the poor natives stricken with sleeping sickness. The patients sat and lay about in all stages of the fearful complaint; some were playing games or working, and looked quite fat and well, while others, almost skeletons, were in a very advanced stage of the disease, and would scarcely live another day. In some cases the progress is very gradual; in others mercifully rapid. The Father told me they had lost over seven hundred

in little more than two years. He also said that the disease could be easily detected by an experienced person, from a certain look in the eyes. This he explained to me because I remarked that really some of them appeared, to a casual observer, to have nothing the matter with them.

A large hospital is in course of construction, but at that time those in the early stages of the disease were placed together in large buildings. When their condition reached a more critical stage, and they were nearing their end, small huts were allotted to them, containing two people at most. The fell disease attacks its victims irrespective of age; some of the sufferers were quite young children. The natives will have nothing to do with their stricken relatives, and it is awful to contemplate what the lot of these hapless creatures would be, were it not for the kindly ministrations of this gentle brotherhood.

I spent nearly two hours at the Mission, and was profoundly interested. Nevertheless, to see so many fellow-creatures doomed to a certain, and perhaps lingering death was one of the saddest sights I have ever witnessed, and when I continued my journey, the outside world seemed to have assumed a different aspect. I felt the flowers had somehow lost their colour, and the sun was not so bright as it had been before I had seen the darker side of the picture.

It was 22 miles from Entebbe to Kampala, and a relay of men should have met us half-

way, but they were not forthcoming, so that perforce the one set had to go the whole distance. Consequently they got very tired, and went slowly, so that it was six o'clock when I got to Mengo. The ladies of the Mission thought I was lost ; two of them came a little way to look for me, and when we met, they walked back with me to the house, which was pretty and home-like, with masses of flowers everywhere.

After a long and trying day I was not sorry to find my head on a deliciously soft pillow, with a real linen pillow-case.

#### KAMPALA

Kampala lies to the north of Entebbe, and somewhat resembles Blantyre in that the scattered portions of the whole settlement are built on various hills. First comes Mengo, on which is situated the residence of the youthful King ; then Basubi Hill, where stands the tomb of King Mtesa ; Namirembe, the Church Missionary Society's Hill ; Rubaga Hill, where the White Fathers are stationed ; and Nakasero, the present, and Kampala, the former, Government Hill.

The view from the Mission heights is very extensive ; the foliage in all directions is luxuriant in the extreme, and of the brightest green. Nearer at hand, the flowers in the gardens are delightful. The roads connecting the scattered portions of the whole settlement are very wide and fairly good.



I did not find time to go as far as Mtesa's tomb, or the ruins of Mackay's church and house during my stay at Kampala ; neither did I visit the French Mission. I am sorry now that I did not see them when I had the chance ; but regrets are useless. The Church Mission in itself was quite enough to occupy the few days I had at my disposal.

I was hospitably entertained at the Ladies' House, where there were two in residence at the time. It is a large building, which is requisitioned for any special meetings or to "put up" any lady missionaries passing through on the way to their different centres, and at times to accommodate a number of candidates up for examination.

The C.M.S. is very wise to insist upon its workers being proficient in the vernacular, for it is absolutely essential ; no one can get really in touch with a people without an intimate acquaintance with their language, but it seems rather a severe ordeal to be called upon—women as well as men—to preach for ten minutes in the native dialect before two clergymen.

I will explain here, in case I use the terms later, that Buganda means the country ; Baganda, the people ; and Luganda, the language of Uganda.

The house occupied by the ladies of the C.M.S. is a two-storied building of pine trees, enclosed by an inner and outer wall, constructed of reeds bound together with a dark fibre, and covered with a deep, thatched roof. A wide verandah makes a comfort-

able resting-place, and gives an extensive view over the surrounding country. The domestic staff was made up of three or four small boys, who in their several capacities cooked, waited at table, and did the house and laundry work.

The cathedral, which is on the summit of the hill, forms a beacon for many miles around, and is large enough to hold between two and three thousand people. Unlike the cathedrals of British Central Africa, it is built in the native style. The surrounding wall is fairly high, and of brick, as are also the pillars. The deep, slanting roof is thatched with grass outside, and made to look beautiful from the interior, by a lining of well-washed and scraped reeds, lashed together in such a manner that the fibre binding them together forms various patterns.

Massive pine trees, enveloped in reeds fastened together in the same manner, form the arches, the whole creating a very artistic effect.

The service on Sunday began at 8 a.m., and half an hour before that, the drum was sending out its mighty boom over the land, and the people could be seen wending their way over the hills from all directions.

When I entered, a few minutes before the service commenced, some hundreds of worshippers were already there, and a continuous stream kept pouring in. The Baganda are wonderfully receptive as regards religion. No pews or seats of any kind are provided; the few white people who require them, send their own chairs, and the natives, the



NAMIREMBE CATHEDRAL



JOHN, ASSANACIO AND MOSES



majority of whom brought a small grass mat or piece of skin, sat upon the floor. The men occupied one side of the building, and the women and children the other. All were spotlessly clean, the men mostly in long, white garments, and the women either in white calico or bark cloth of cinnamon colour, hanging from their shoulders, and drawn in at the waist by a red sash. Each carried a bag containing a Bible and Prayer-book.

The service was conducted in *Luganda*, and the people followed most attentively. The sermon was preached by a native, although he was not an ordained clergyman. I could not understand a word, but the sight of the reverent attitude of the people, combined with the mighty wave of sound as they joined in the responses, made a sermon far more eloquent to me than mere words.

Over 200 received the Sacrament, and that was considered rather a small number, as usually there are quite 300 communicants. Two white and two coloured clergymen officiated.

The natives go through a long course of instruction prior to their admission, as Christians, to the Mission; and after that a still further course is obligatory before they are admitted as communicants.

At the close of the service there was a collection, not of coins but of cowrie shells, which are a *Buganda* currency. A rupee (1s. 4d.) buys 1,000 shells, so had it been a wealthy congregation, the taking of the offertory would have been a serious matter.

I was very much amused by one little boy who had been accidentally passed over. He insisted on the man coming back, when, with much pomp and importance, he placed one shell—equal to about one-fifteenth of a farthing—in the bag.

During the week I visited the Girls' School, and found it well attended by pupils of all sizes and ages. Some full-grown women were learning their letters with tiny mites aged five or six. A few could read quite well, and all seemed greatly interested in their work.

Another morning was devoted to looking over a boarding school for the sons of chiefs. They numbered about 70, and were a very bright, clean, intelligent-looking set of lads. A new house was nearing completion, and as soon as it was finished, 30 more boys, then waiting for admission, were to be accommodated.

The *Baganda* fully realise the advantages of education, and do what they can to advance it. Each chief in the surrounding districts had gladly contributed 100 rupees towards the building expenses of the new house. The annual fee for each scholar is 40 rupees. A great many of them speak English; they all write well, and their freehand drawing, done with the brush, was simply marvellous. They are also taught class-singing, and it was a pretty sight to see them squatting on the floor in long, clean, white shirts, holding in their hands the "Royal Songster," a book bound in a bright blue cover, with King Edward's portrait on the front.

The general effect as they sat facing me was decidedly "A study in Black, White, and Blue." Their voices are sweet and mellow, and they also possess great accuracy of ear.

Physical drill is included in the curriculum, and I saw them go through some exercises with great precision and dexterity. The performance was quite worthy of any first-class school at home.

The teacher pointed out to me a few interesting boys, among them the King's younger brother, and a son of the chief who murdered Bishop Hannington. I then went over the dormitories, which looked very comfortable; the beds were spread with blankets of a bright red colour, which was the dominant feature of the rooms.

The whole school reflects the greatest credit upon the able and energetic member of the Mission under whose charge it has developed to its present successful condition.

Meanwhile, in the intervals of sight-seeing, I was trying, or rather my Mission friends were, to get two or three good personal boys to accompany me on my journey, but none of those whom they thought suitable seemed to like the idea of going as far as Gondokoro. I could not think of going on, until I had secured at least one boy who spoke good English, as it would be necessary for him, like the others I had had, to act as interpreter for the next month or more. So while waiting for boys to be found, I occupied my time in seeing the various places of interest in the neighbourhood.

By a fortunate chance, the C.M.S. had fixed the date for a confirmation service at Gayaza coincident with my visit to Kampala, and I decided to go there for the day. As it is a two and a half hours' journey by ricksha, I was prepared for an early start, but a deluge of rain detained me until 7 a.m. I was very sorry to think I should be late, but my fears on that score proved groundless, for I was presently overtaken by the Bishop, who had also thought it too wet to start sooner.

It was interesting to be carried along behind his lordship, as it enabled me to see various little incidents which occurred along the route. As we neared Gayaza, the people were watching for him, and as soon as he drew near they fell on their knees, bowed their heads to the ground, and clapped their hands. Then rising, they ran along with us, so we arrived in quite a procession.

The two ladies in charge of the station met us in the porch of their picturesque little house, and although it was only ten o'clock, a daintily laid tea-table was a welcome sight, and we thankfully drank the refreshing beverage. Then we walked to the church, where a large general congregation was assembled.

The building was a primitive structure, with a thatched roof supported by tree-trunks encased in a kind of matting made of reeds. Near the chancel rail, which was a low reed screen, sat the candidates for confirmation, about 40 in number, mostly women. They looked extremely neat in their



new pieces of cloth, which they had made a point of having for the occasion.

It was an impressive service of prayer and praise, with the usual laying-on of hands. When it was over we adjourned to the house, while the newly confirmed waited to have their names registered. It was a long business, as everything is in this country; where their motto is "*mpora mpora*" (slowly, slowly).

All was finished about three o'clock, and they trooped up to the Mission house, where the Bishop received them on the verandah, and said a few words of encouragement as he handed to each a small book before they returned home. Some of them, I was told, had been in the church since six o'clock that morning.

Bishop Tucker had then been in the country for many years, and had confirmed no less than 16,000 natives; it is a truly wonderful record.

At Gayaza there is a school for the daughters of chiefs, corresponding to the one I have already described at Namirembe for their sons. The girls were dressed in semi-European costume, that is, a cotton dress of the Mother Hubbard type, much affected by the natives in Honolulu. It hangs loosely from a yoke back and front, and falls without restraining girdle to the ankles. They choose their own material, and their different tastes were displayed in the most varied hues and patterns. On their way to the church they walked two and two past the house, and the gaudy dresses struck a

high note of colour against the intensely green background of foliage.

We visited the schoolroom in the afternoon, and heard them sing. I also saw specimens of writing, arithmetic, and other work. It was really extraordinary to see and realise the educational advantages possessed in Uganda by the future chiefs and their sisters. Later on they will surely be a great influence in the country for good.

I was shown here a photograph of the shells that were brought to the Mission by the chiefs in honour of King Edward's Coronation. They are always threaded like beads, and strands of them were placed on the ground and stretched across the road from side to side for over a mile.

Altogether my trip to Gayaza was full of interest, and I had a delightful day.

On the morrow, accompanied by my hostess, I increased my acquaintance with Mengo by going to pay my respects to the young King, Daudi Chwa, which is translated "David flying." After descending the Mission Hill in a ricksha, we ran along a very wide road between beautiful fencing of plaited reeds, enclosing the grounds of the Katikiro, or Prime Minister. On approaching the royal precincts I had to leave the ricksha and walk through endless courtyards formed by fences of tall, yellow reeds of tiger grass. The winding course I had to follow from one enclosure to another, reminded me of the maze at Hampton Court.

At last we arrived at the royal building—I cannot





KING DANDI CHWA, OF UGANDA

quite call it a palace. There was no one in the house, but the man who had guided us through the "maze" volunteered to inform the King of our presence. When he returned he conducted us through a few more enclosures to the sports field, where there was a most exciting football match in progress.

We sat in the pavilion, and in a few moments His Majesty, a boy of about ten, was disentangled from the melée of players and stood before us, his face lighted up with excitement over the game. He has an English tutor, which may account for his orthodox football rig-out—flannel knickers, shirt, &c. He had quite charming manners, and spoke fairly good English. I talked a little to him, but had not the heart to keep him away from the game for long, so told him I would sit for a while and watch him play.

The other boys were much older and bigger than the King, and he scarcely ever got a chance of a kick. He was a very enthusiastic player, and tore after the ball with wild delight, and I was glad to see him get one "header" before I left.

I was shown over the house, which is furnished in European style; everything was simple and well kept. The little King never goes beyond the enclosure, but he has practically all he wants inside, even to a riding track. On the way out I inspected the royal drums, which are kept in a separate building near the first entrance, under the guardianship of a special attendant.

As I passed, I called to see the Katikiro, Sir Apolo Kagwa, who came to England for the Coronation of King Edward VII. and had since been knighted. He was unfortunately out, but I saw over his house, which is quite an imposing two-storied building. Although these advanced natives build themselves such fine houses, they have no idea how to furnish them. Six chairs, a table, and a few unframed photographs are deemed sufficient for a room of huge dimensions.

I sallied forth another afternoon and went over some large cotton works. It is confidently expected that cotton will be a successful industry in the future. There is also a good trade done in castor-oil beans and chillies. As the settlement is only 22 miles from the boat on Victoria Nyanza, there is every facility for getting the produce to the home market.

The business street at Kampala is thronged all day by crowds of Swahili, Arabs, and Indians. The booths, or shops, entice the people with gaudy prints, beads, native pottery, brass wire, pots and pans, grains, and vegetables.

On the Mission Hill, near the cathedral, stands the C.M.S. hospital. Unfortunately the first one erected by the Society was destroyed by fire, caused by lightning striking the roof. The repetition of such a disaster has been guarded against by building the present one of brick, with an iron roof and concrete floor. The men's ward is large, and in the form of a cross, so that a nurse sitting in the

middle can command a view of every bed. There is a similar ward for women, and I was taken up to a bed in which lay three little black mites—triplets—of a month old, and very queer, uncanny-looking objects they were.

In addition to the wards, there is a very fine operating theatre, besides smaller rooms for the nursing staff. The patients are under the charge of two English Mission nurses, who are assisted in their duties by a number of native girls. Upstairs is a hall devoted to research work, and there I saw under the microscope some perfect specimens of the bacillus of various tropical diseases. The people of Mengo are fortunate in having among them at the present time two doctors of distinction, who are devoting their lives and abilities to the relief of suffering humanity.

Time, the inexorable, was flying while I had been enjoying myself, and 'all too soon the morning arrived when I had to leave Mengo and commence safari again. The first few days, until the men have been tested, are always rather trying, as it takes some time to get them into the swing of their work. However, I had been successful in securing three "boys" who promised to go with me as far as Gondokoro. Two of these spoke English, and this was a great comfort to me, as with only one able to do so, I was always anxious as to what I should do if anything happened to incapacitate him on the way. These

were all more satisfactory than the last three, so I started feeling quite easy in my mind about my domestics. The head boy, John, was one of the teachers in the school, and had been allowed to come by the courtesy of the Mission authorities. Assanacio was the second boy, and the cook bore the patriarchal name of Moses. I noticed that these Mission boys consider it quite *de rigueur* to be possessed of a book and umbrella, and each of the three started off on sofari with these belongings very much *en evidence*. I fancy it must have been to cut a dash before the porters.

As I mentioned before, I was travelling on this stage of my journey by ricksha, but as some Mission ladies arrived from the direction in which I was going, with the news that the roads were so flooded that they would be quite impracticable for that mode of conveyance, I thought it wise to engage a few additional men in case I had to resort to the hammock. By hammock I mean exactly the same conveyance which I have elsewhere called a machila: in the regions within touch of Portuguese influence it is commonly known by the Portuguese word, but since I have been in British territory, the English term has become more natural.

All told, we numbered about 36. The porters were engaged to take me to Butiaba on Lake Albert Nyanza, a distance of 175 miles. From Mengo our course thither lay northwards and slightly to the west.



The Secretary of the C.M.S. had been indefatigable in getting my carriers together : up to the last he was on the spot to allot them their loads, and on December 18th I said adieu to Mengo.

I liked my new form of locomotion very much. I had four human horses, and they ran well. The delicious morning air, as I set forth, was typical of the early hours of equatorial Africa, and the world seemed very bright.

My porters all dallied at the market as we passed, to spend some of their advanced pay, so that I was the first in camp. Between Entebbe and Lake Albert Nyanza there are fixed camping-grounds, enclosed by fences, with rest-houses for Europeans and sheds for the porters. When these thatched houses get old, they harbour a horrible little insect called the tick, and as the fever they propagate is, if anything, worse than malaria, it is not wise to run the risk of occupying the shelters even during the day. Fortunately for me, H.M. Commissioner had been expected along this route, and in preparation for him, the old structures had been replaced by new ones, so I felt quite safe in using them in the day time. They are all built in the same primitive way : a wall about 4 feet high encloses a square the size of an ordinary room, with a mud floor. Over this, raised high and supported in the centre by tree-trunks, is a roof sloping beyond the wall nearly to the ground, which ensures a draught if there is the least breeze. Thus they afford a grateful protection

during the heat of the day when the inside of a tent is unbearable.

The much-dreaded tick is a loathsome parasite, about the size and appearance, as a rule, of an ordinary bug. The favourite spot for fixing itself on animals, is between the toes, or near the eyes, and ears, and if left in possession, will in two or three days gorge itself with the blood of its victim until it is distended to the size and colour of a small black grape. I was strict about Maffi being well overhauled each day, for when it once attacks an animal it sticks to it like a leech, and very sharp nails are necessary to detach it.

There are other species, of which the dimensions range up to several times the size of those I saw, and these take up their abode on large animals such as oxen, &c., until they are in turn eaten by the bird called an ox-pecker.

"Big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em,  
And little fleas have lesser fleas, and so *ad infinitum*."

We had a very short journey as usual the first morning, but on making a few calculations I found it necessary to order double marches for the next two days, in order to get to Hoima in the average time of eight days, which I was anxious to do, so as to be there on Christmas morning. The men arrived in camp in excellent condition after the tramp of 24 miles, and I hoped they would be the same the following day.

I still continued my practice of walking for the first hour or more, if not too hot, for although we were travelling away from the equator, it was getting hotter every day. It was easy to account for this, however, as we were leaving the high plateaux and gradually descending to the level of the Nile. Albert Nyanza is only 2,170 feet above the sea.

The road so far was excellent, notwithstanding that it was through bog-land. It was hardly boggy, however, as we understand the term, but rather soft ground, overgrown with very high grass interspersed with trees and good-sized shrubs.

Round one of the trees we passed we saw a number of birds with the brightest of yellow breasts, making a great commotion. They were feeding their young, who were in nests suspended from the branches of the trees. A curious feature of the nests was that the openings were at the bottom, so I cannot imagine how they kept the nestlings in.

The butterflies along this route were gorgeous, flitting here and there in hundreds, their beautiful wings catching the sun at all angles. The birds were so small, and the butterflies so large, that at a little distance it was difficult to distinguish one from the other.

Owing to its boggy nature, there is not much land under cultivation, except a strip about 10 feet wide on each side of the road, where the natives

are to be seen hoeing their little plots. It is the women who tend the gardens, and, once or twice I noticed their wee babies lying on the ground. As they are just the colour of the earth and the size of the clods, the special providence whose duty it is to look after children must have been on the alert, or many would have been hoed to death.

The carriers appeared quite cheerful after the second long day, and as now there was only a single march left for each day, I knew we should have no further trouble about the distance. The porters on this section of my journey did not have too good a time; food seemed very scarce, and they had to go long distances in search of it. It was never brought to them until late in the evening, sometimes after I had gone to bed. There was always tremendous altercation over the purchase of it, and when that was done, the flour, Indian corn, or bananas, as the case might be, had to be cooked; this of course made it very late before the men got to rest.

It had been quite the reverse in German territory. There the food was brought the moment we arrived, and the presents I received were almost sufficient to supply the men with provisions without buying any.

The road I was following from Entebbe to Butiaba is a trade route, and I was advised, as there might be robbers about, to have one or two men on the watch all night, so I engaged two,

whose sole duty was to mount guard and keep the fires up.

On the third night out, I was lounging on my deck-chair in the rest-house, when the *nympala* made his appearance before me with two men, and I thought, with a long-suffering sigh, that it was to be the same story over again—he was going to bring to me for diagnosis and treatment, all the men who were sick, or who fancied they were. However, when I called John to translate to me what he wanted, he informed me very solemnly, "This is no good place, plenty of lions and other wild beasts." So he wished to place a man on either side of the shed in which I was sitting, which was of course quite open. Accordingly the two men took up their positions, and I lay and wondered what my two worthy protectors would do, if a lion should really be starving enough to venture so near. However, I did not wish to put them to the test, so I soon retired to the comparative safety of my tent, and enjoined the men to keep up extra watch-fires. I felt sure they would do so, as when lions and other wild beasts are known to be near, the men are always very anxious, for their own sakes, to take every precaution. I was careful to fasten Maffi securely inside the tent, as it would not have taken more than a jackal to make short work of him, if he were found straying.

The fourth day was very dreary from a social point of view, as we scarcely met a human being, and in places the road was like a river, but my

ricksha bore me valiantly across the deepest slough without shedding its wheels, so the hammock after all had a complete rest. We only got into camp just in time to avoid a terrific deluge of rain, and I was rather afraid that the road would be in an even worse condition next day, but after we got over one rather bad piece in a hollow, soon after the start, the rest was as dry as a bone.

After passing through flat, boggy country for about five days, we came to a hilly and consequently more picturesque region, but the scenery as a whole is monotonous.

We camped that day at Katwe, near the telegraph office, which is in charge of a white man, who came to see me, with a telegram from H.M. Commissioner at Hoima, expressing his desire to prepare accommodation for me, and asking therefore to be informed of the number of my caravan. I also learned that the boat would leave Butiaba about December 31st.

There was a palatial rest-house at Katwe, and had I not been afraid of tick fever, I could have slept in a large and lofty room.

About two hours after we started next day a runner overtook us with a letter, "On His Britannic Majesty's Service." The short phrase was quite enough to span the thousands of miles which lay between me and my native country, and made me feel quite at home. The document informed me that the house of the Deputy-Commissioner at Hoima was placed at my disposal, so I felt very

pleased to know I should be comfortable, and fairly independent.

The sun was overcast most of that day, and the scenery so typically English, that it was easy for the time being, to fancy myself in that part of Suffolk immortalised by Constable. But this idea was quickly dispelled by an antelope which at that moment bounded from the thicket and fled across the road only a few yards in front of the ricksha.

We arrived in camp before eleven, and found the tent nearly pitched. For the first time several people brought in fowls, eggs, and passion fruit for sale, so our larder was well replenished. I had a quiet, restful day, and was much interested in watching some dear little birds with light grey breasts, which were very busy indeed, flying to and fro and twittering as they built their nests in my roof.

We got off at sunrise for another day's march through scrub, bush, and marshland, still surrounded by butterflies innumerable, and beautiful flowers raising their heads to the sun. Among them in great profusion were large 'lavender' pansies, and a small flowering shrub like mimosa, pushed itself up amid the denser undergrowth. Still higher were to be seen fine trees of the cedar brotherhood.

In the afternoon I received a call from the wife of the headman of the neighbourhood. She was dressed in a kind of loose, untidy, cotton wrapper, and accompanied by a little maid who carried a

piece of skin for her to sit on. I asked John why she was dressed like that, and felt rather tickled when he replied, "Some of the chiefs' wives do dress like the English." I was sorry I had no one with whom to exchange a smile.

I was too busy writing, to keep the visitors entertained for long, so I gave them some books with pictures to look at, which amused them for a time. When they were tired, they conveyed to me through John, that they would like to go, and I expressed my willingness that they should do so. The little woman then rose and departed, the maid picking up the mat and following her.

Although they had been very silent in my presence, no doubt as soon as they were out of earshot they gabbled away to their hearts' content, about the strange white woman, with her dress curving in at the waist and her hair done in such a curious fashion, points which never failed to astonish and interest the native women.

I was very pleased with my ricksha men; they were always cheerful and willing, and I never had the least trouble with them. At times I was quite surprised and touched by their thoughtfulness. They saw me buy some ground-nuts one morning, and evidently made a note of my liking for them, for after that, whenever they managed to procure any, they would always come to me in a little procession, each man offering me a few.

When they were running with the ricksha they kept up a quaint kind of song with a chorus.



One man would begin with a few words ; then the chorus would join in, chanting on one single note, and, as it were, answering him. Then the soloist in his turn would reply, still in the same monotone, and thus they would answer each other several times, till the soloist proceeded with a few more words, forming a kind of recitative, followed by the same curious chorus. They would go on chanting thus for miles, and their somewhat monotonous but mellow tones, had a very soothing effect.

December 25th dawned bright and sunny, and was about as different from a Christmas morning at home as it is possible to imagine. We had returned to the swamps again, and that day we went over the Kafu Bridge, 450 yards long, the boundary limit of Unyoro. The so-called bridge is really a series of tree-trunks placed upon an embankment thrown up across the swamp. I walked over it, as it was too uneven to be comfortable in the ricksha. On the other side the road was excellent for some distance. The public ways varied very much : some would be quite equal to a good road in England, and then a portion would be encountered with a deep gutter across it, rent by the fierce rush of water after torrential rain. But when one considers the country and its climate, it is surprising that they have any roads at all.

Occasionally as we walked along, we could hear the tap-tap with which I had become familiar in the South Sea Islands, and which I knew meant that a

piece of bark was being hammered out for cloth, and I thought I would like to see how they did it here, so one morning I made the boys go off the track in the direction of the noise. I then discovered a man sitting under a shed with a long beam of wood in front of him, on which he was hammering out the bark. He was using a mallet with finely-cut grooves, which marked the bark with ribbed lines like corduroy. I could not wait to see the process completed, but by dint of turning the bark again and again, and repeating the hammering on both sides, it is gradually beaten into the semblance of fine-textured cloth. Although it is white when taken from the tree and stripped of the outer rind, the bark soon assumes a delicate tint of brown, just as a cut apple does on exposure to the air.

The people in this part of the country seemed to be very much scared by the ricksha, and like the natives near Zomba, hastily picked up their belongings and fled into the thick grass.

The hills, that lie round Hoima became visible just before noon, and shortly after, I was ensconced in my deck-chair on the verandah of the Deputy Commissioner's house, awaiting my loads, which made their appearance some two hours later.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### HOIMA

Capital of Unyoro—A solitary Christmas dinner—Visit the C.M.S. station—A Bank Holiday feast—Visit the lines—Commissioner returns—A cow and calf join our caravan—A week's rest—On again

**H**OIMA, the capital of Unyoro, rests peacefully on a plateau surrounded by beautiful green hills. It is two days' march from Lake Albert Nyanza, and in clear weather, the mountains of the Congo territory can be seen distinctly. It is a military as well as a civil station, and is well laid out with presumptuously wide roads. In about the centre of the settlement are the Government buildings, post office, &c., and in front of these is a square, formed of two fine lawns, green as if they were in the Emerald Isle. Close by is a very large native market, and when I visited it, I caused almost as much sensation as at Udjidji. All the people ceased to haggle for a time, and followed me round, while the native police walked in front and cleared a way for me.

Trees have been planted all over the township, and in a few months have grown to quite a good

size. The house in which I was lodged was built on a slight eminence in the middle of the plateau, surrounded by a well-stocked flower-garden. It had recently been inhabited, but was then quite empty, and as there was nobody there when I arrived to advise me, I made a mistake, and furnished the wrong rooms. It was only the picturesque point of view that occurred to me, and I chose the side of the house with the best outlook. Later I noticed that there were no doors between the rooms, and shortly after this discovery, visitors arrived. Two white men—one was the head of the police—who were out for their evening walk, strolled round the house to see that all was safe, and they were much astonished to find I had arrived without their knowing it. I learned from them, that I had fixed myself up in the reception-room and that the sleeping apartments were at the back. However, I did not much care for them when I saw them, and as all my things were already unpacked in the other, I decided to stay where I was. The men were very good, and nailed up some Americana (or calico) over the windows and across the door.

The sergeant said he would send me a guard of four men to protect the house at night as long as I remained, and accordingly each evening at dusk they appeared, and took me under their charge until the morning. He also told me that the Commissioner, who would otherwise have been to see me, was at Butiaba, making arrangements for the boat which was to take me down the Nile.

On their departure I sat down to my solitary Christmas dinner, which was set on a table placed on the broad verandah. The *menu* was quite simple. I had tinned soup, a scraggy chicken—price twopence—which by a wild flight of imagination I tried to magnify to the proportions of a turkey, and I finished with the *pièce de resistance* in the shape of a tinned plum-pudding.

The whole was eaten during a magnificent display of lightning. Every few moments the hills and surrounding landscape stood out as clear as by day.

By a curious coincidence, three letters were brought to me as I sat at table, one being from home. If the most strenuous effort had been made to secure their arrival on Christmas Day, it would undoubtedly have failed. The letters were on their way to Gondokoro, but the postmaster saw them, and knowing I was daily expected, kindly detained them, and sent them up promptly when he heard I had arrived. I certainly had an unique Christmas.

Next morning I got up with the comfortable feeling that I need not hurry, and was glad of the space of a room to move about in. Assanacio, who was sometimes very funny, came in to get my bath ready, and moved deliberately about, enjoying the unusual leisure, but without saying a word. Suddenly he seemed to remember that on this occasion there was time to say "Good morning," and he suddenly stopped his work, drew himself

up very stiffly, and greeted me solemnly; then he went on quietly with his arrangements.

After breakfast I started on a tour of inspection, and finally found my way to the C.M.S. station, to call upon the only white woman just then in the place. She and her husband expressed their regret that they had not known of my arrival the day before. They had sent up twice to ascertain if I had come, but could get no news, so they concluded I should not be there that day.

They kindly asked me to stay to lunch, so I sent my ricksha and boys away, and was glad, after the solitude of the last few days, to give myself up to the enjoyment of a little social intercourse. They had a jolly little boy of about three, and it was a treat to see a white child after not having seen any children for so long.

In course of conversation I discovered that we had lived within a stone's throw of each other in London, so we had much in common to talk about.

They had made their little house very cosy and home-like, and I thoroughly enjoyed the comfort of real easy-chairs and nice table appointments. Some people seem to consider that missionaries should give no heed to this kind of thing, nor think of anything but religion. They lose sight of the desirability of their having ordinary comforts and nice surroundings, which are so essential for their own health of mind and body, besides being an elevating example to the natives. It is for this reason that I take exception to the rule of the

Universities' Mission, as regards the celibacy of their members. In my opinion, if the climate is suitable, and women work with the men, marriage is no drawback. On the contrary, the influence that emanates from the home-life, lived among the people, should be very great indeed.

At four o'clock they took me to see the Christmas feast which they had organised for all their school teachers, who had come in for it from outlying districts, as well as from the immediate neighbourhood.

Banana leaves were spread on the ground, round which squatted perhaps twenty or thirty teachers, ready and eager for the entertainment to begin. Colossal pieces of cooked meat, interspersed with hillocks of boiled bananas and sweet potatoes, were already on the "tables." Our arrival was the signal for the native preacher to say grace, and then the fun began.

One or two headmen of the Mission were superintending the serving, and allotted to each man a chunk of meat, which was seized upon with avidity, and torn from the bone by fingers and teeth. Every now and again one of the "guests" would snatch a lump from the banana or sweet potato heaps, roll it up in his hands, and then dip it into a general bowl of soup, placed in the centre for the purpose. There were crowds of spectators, and after the first keen-edge of appetite had been blunted, the more generous of the favoured ones would occasionally pass a piece of food to a friend in the crowd.

When the first course was finished, heads of American corn were thrown to each, and it must have been a treat, for they caught them with undisguised delight and ate them with evident relish.

We left at that stage, not waiting to see pieces of sugar-cane handed round for dessert, which ended the festive celebration of Boxing Day. We returned to the house, and had our tea in a more conventional manner. On the way, the interesting old thatched church, and the beginning of the new brick one were pointed out to me.

The next evening I went in quite the opposite direction to see the Lines, and was shown round by the officer in command. His men were mostly Nubians, who, I believe, make very excellent soldiers. Their huts were extremely well kept and their wives looked clean and neat.

When the Commissioner returned from Butiaba, he told me he had made all the necessary arrangements concerning the boat, and as it would await my pleasure there was no need for me to move on until I felt inclined to do so.

The difficulty about remaining was the scarcity of food for the men, as the Baganda do not care for the corn grown for the people of Unyoro. However, when I explained this to the Commissioner, he said I need not trouble further about the lack of suitable provender, as he would get a chief to send in some potatoes. Towards evening they arrived, beautifully packed in bundles of about 7 lbs., but







STARTING THE LOADS



THREE PORTERS

when they were placed before the porters, a noisy discussion at once began, and I saw signs of discontent on all their faces. When I asked the reason of this, the men grumbled and in an injured manner, said the chief was asking 30 shells a bundle, which they declared was too high a price. As this worked out to about one half-penny for 7 lbs., I wondered what they expected for their money, and told them to be quick and pay the man, or I would have the whole lot returned at once. Upon that they hurriedly picked up the bundles and disappeared.

The missionaries very kindly lent me a cow to take with me as far as Butiaba, so that until I went on thence by boat, I was assured of fresh milk twice a day, which was a great boon, if only from a health point of view. So also were the vegetables with which they provided me, besides delicious strawberries, which were an unexpected luxury.

After a very pleasant and restful week at Hoima, "onward, ever onward," was the order of the day.

The loads were all on their way by five o'clock one morning; but my personal boys, as was invariably the case after a holiday, were very trying, and had nothing ready, so that another two hours had elapsed before we could follow.

The road was good and the physical aspect of the country unchanged. We encountered a very picturesque party, with several transport waggons each drawn by sixteen bullocks. The shouting was terrific when the drivers had to guide their

teams to the side of the road to give me room to pass.

Soon after we got to camp the chief and his wife came to see me, and brought me some paw-paws, which were always acceptable. As a return present I gave the wife some needles, which pleased her greatly. The man was dressed in a long, white gown with little Turkish tassels as ornaments, evidently an Arab importation. The woman wore her latest "creation," with evident pride and pleasure. It was not the cut of the garment which made it so *distingué*, but the elaborate pattern traced upon the material. To a European it was palpably the outside piece of a roll of white calico. Stamped in blue was a dog's head as trade mark, and above it, in large letters, "Henrietta." Below that, forming a semicircle, were the words "Mills' fine sheeting," under that again two capital L's, and "30 yards, L. Bison, Zanzibar." The lady wore it with an air of superiority, knowing it was not every one who could display such a wonderful design.

Next morning, at daybreak, we headed direct for the lake, and the straight and somewhat uninteresting road we had been following, now became less monotonous in character. We came after a while to several short, steep ascents, and as after the wet season, such portions of the road are usually more or less torn up by the water, I had to get out of the ricksha more than once.

It was very hot by eleven o'clock when we arrived at Butiaba, where I completed yet another overland stage of the long journey to Cairo.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### BUTIABA

Beautiful camp—Lions roar at night—Big game plentiful—White man arrives—The heat intense—Elephant spoor—On the lake—A threatened storm—Enter the Nile—The Nkalanda ant—Bird life—Wadelai—See elephant—River swarms with crocodiles and hippos—Unique part of Nile

TOWARDS the north end of Lake Albert Nyanza—so named by Sir Samuel Baker—lies Butiaba. It is not of sufficient importance to be marked upon ordinary maps, but it is just a little to the south of the spot where the Victoria Nile empties its waters over the Murchison Falls into the lake.

My tent was pitched on the heights, 500 feet above the water, whence I commanded a beautiful view of the surrounding country.

I found a Goanese in charge of the telegraph station, and he was most anxious to do all he could for me. He placed his office at my service during the hottest part of the day, when the tent was unbearable.

The porters, who found it quite impossible to

obtain food, said that after a short rest they would start back on their homeward journey the same evening. I managed to get enough potatoes for the cow-boys, as I did not wish to part with the cow until the last moment. My personal boys had been warned of the dearth of food, so had provided themselves with rice from Hoima. For some reason there was more difficulty in getting sustenance for the porters in the Uganda Protectorate than anywhere else. The food question is a serious one, for without abundance of supplies the men become weakened and more liable to sickness. Moreover, poor feeding produces a general gloom, and everything seems to go wrong.

Besides the telegraphist, another Goanese clerk from Hoima, was camping out with his wife for the New Year holidays, and when the latter came to see me, she related how she had heard lions roaring quite near the previous night. This started the telegraphist on some of his lion stories, for which, I learned afterwards, he was famous. He told me he had seen several in the vicinity, and once a lion, lioness, and cub came within a few yards of his hut. At another time, he said, there were at least two hundred elephants congregated all about the road to the lake, so that no one dared pass up or down. As the people had no licence to shoot them, they were at their wits' end to know what to do. They finally got together a large number of natives to beat tin cans, or make any noise they could devise, to disperse them. Big game of all kinds is very

plentiful, as the hills and country behind are preserved.

I sat in the office most of the day, but took my evening meal just outside the tent, by the light of the full moon. The prospect was glorious. After dinner I lay in my long chair, and revelled in the view of the lake, with the bright stars above it, glittering through the clear atmosphere. All was beautiful beyond words, and I meditated quietly on the delightfully peaceful ending to the old year.

Notwithstanding lion and elephant stories, I slept soundly, and woke to the delights of another day. The heat usually became very great towards mid-day, but as a rule, when I was beginning to think it was just about as much as I could stand, a gentle breeze would spring up to give me a fresh lease of life.

The boat was hourly expected, and all day I was hoping it would appear soon. I had no wish to be delayed as I had been at Tanganyika.

During the afternoon a speck was seen on the water, which in a short time proved to be the boat. It came nearer and nearer, and presently we saw it enter the little creek 3 miles below, to discharge its passenger and freight. The former was a doctor from Gondokoro, who was on his way to join the commission on sleeping sickness, convened at Entebbe.

It was past six before he had climbed to the plateau. As soon as he arrived I refreshed him with tea, while he in turn, regaled me with the

adventures of his journey, and gave me some hints as to where I was likely to get a little fresh milk or eggs on the way. He had evidently had a very tiring and somewhat uncomfortable time.

The boatmen had been rowing against stream for ten days, so I felt it would be wise to delay my departure over the morrow, so that they might enjoy a well-earned rest. I did not in the least mind postponing my start now that I knew the boat and men were on the spot awaiting me.

I again dined by the light of the moon, and luxuriated in the immunity from mosquitoes, which made it possible to enjoy the beauties of the evening without any drawback.

The doctor and his caravan were off by seven the next morning, and I was rather pleased to hear that the porters were just as vociferous and noisy when making a start under masculine control as they were when setting forth with me. Up to that time I had harboured the humiliating idea that it arose from want of respect for the authority of my sex.

In preparation for a fresh start the next day the hammock had to be got ready for use once more. The top was tied on securely, and all the ropes tested and put in proper order. By the time that and a few more items had been supervised, it was too hot for anything but sitting still.

Ever since I had been at Butiaba the haze over the lake had been very thick indeed, and in the afternoon it became absolutely bronze with the



heat. As I sat in the telegraph shed, sheltering from the fierce rays of the mid-day sun, it interested me very much to see the few native police of outlying districts file in to receive their monthly pay. As the clerk paid each man, the latter signed the receipt with his thumb-mark, which the Goanese told me later, was as clear to him as if they had written their names in the ordinary way.

The few days' rest I had here was very welcome to me, for I knew that the next two or three weeks would rather tax my strength, as the heat would increase daily as we journeyed down the Nile. I had greatly appreciated, too, the fresh milk every day, and felt that it had fortified me for possible deprivations to come. I was very hopeful that things would be better for me than they had been represented, and took encouragement from the fact that, once on the river, I should be going with the current, and not against it, so that at any rate I should reach my destination in a shorter time than it took to come up.

As my first day's journey would be across a stretch of lake, which I had been warned was liable to get rather rough as the day wore on, I was anxious to make an early start, but the boys were very tiresome and did not get up. Neither were the porters ready for the loads, so I had a general rout out all round, and finally set off at 6.30. On the way across the 3 miles of plain to the water, several elephant tracks were pointed out to me. The great beasts had crushed the under-

growth beneath their feet, and their huge bulk, pushing through the high grass, had left a veritable lane behind. They had crossed the path we were taking, and judging from the freshness of the spoor, not so very long before. There was every indication of large numbers being in the vicinity, but it is astonishing how few wild animals are actually seen, although the neighbourhood may abound with them.

In time we arrived at the few huts and sheds which I suppose, correctly speaking, constitute Butiaba, but no sane person would attempt to remain down on the lake shore, unless they wished to end their days by fever.

My heart failed me a little when I saw the small craft which was to be my home by day, for more than a week, for it was merely a large rowing boat carrying a sail. It was manned by six rowers and a coxswain. Besides my own paraphernalia, it was packed with small general freight for Wadelai and Nimuli. The stern was left clear for me, and over it they had stretched some sail-cloth to secure me some shelter.

After settling in, I looked, as usual, to see if all my things had been brought down, but could not see the bed bundle. I inquired where it was, but no one knew anything about it. I had no fancy for going on without it, so a great rushing backwards and forwards to find it ensued, and after about a quarter of an hour's search, it was discovered in the boat, lying peacefully under another load. We



THE GOOD INTENT



VILLAGE ON UPPER NILE





were all pretty hot by that time, and were glad to push off into the lake. It was then nine o'clock, and a superb morning.

The outline of the lake is very varied, and green to the water's edge, but we soon left the shore and rowed out into the open. It had been my intention to go to Mehagi, a Belgian station on the other side, and stay there the night, but towards the afternoon the lake began to get rough, as I had been warned it would, and it increased in roughness every hour, until at last the waves splashed over us, and we were tossed about in an ominous fashion. The men said that they were afraid to cross, and that we had better seek shelter on the nearer side. I felt rather vexed and disappointed at being again thwarted in my desire to see a Belgian station, but considering the treacherous nature of the lake I did not feel justified in insisting, so had to submit, with the best grace I could, to the inevitable.

My boat was called the *Good Intent*, but however good her intentions, she was a small boat, and I should have been sorry to encounter much dirty weather in her. However, there only remained a short distance to cover on the lake, and I hoped next day to be in comparative safety on the river. We did not land until 5.30 p.m., so we had been eight and a half hours in the boat, and I felt very glad to step ashore and stretch my limbs a little. I roused the boys myself the next morning at 4.30, but even then we were not on our way as early as I had wished to be. About two hours

after we started, we came to the place where the Nile water mingles with that of the lake, and had we turned and travelled a few miles up the river, we might have seen the Victoria Nile, with its accumulated waters from Jinja, on the Victoria Nyanza, dash through a chasm 20 to 25 feet wide, and in two leaps reach a broad basin 140 feet below, whence it continues its course between steep rocks, hills, and jungles, until by degrees it recovers from its unwonted exertions, and flows calmly and gently along, forming the smooth surface which we were then crossing.

In the vicinity of the Murchison Falls there are said to be more crocodiles, hippos, elephants, lions, monkeys, and so forth, than in any other region in the world.

It was very beautiful at that early hour to glide gently through the morning mist upon the waters of the historic river. I roughly estimated it to be about 2 miles wide at its commencement, but it soon divided itself into various channels.

During part of the day I amused myself and the men by trying to teach one of them English. Six of them sat facing me, and to the nearest I would point out my various features, giving him the name for each, which he repeated after me. The fun came the next day when I tested his memory, and he called a nose an ear, an ear an eye, and so forth. Although the others did not quite understand, they were quick to detect by my manner when he made a mistake, and to laugh at him. They had all

come up from the coast, so that they were more or less accustomed to hear English, even if they could not speak it.

The second day was rather uneventful, and the river not particularly beautiful, crocodiles and hippos being about the only indication of the tropics. The sides of the river are very swampy, formed of masses of decayed vegetation, in which giant grass and papyrus rushes have taken root, and these more or less floating banks, of perhaps half a mile in width, prevent the possibility of landing, except at certain accessible places.

We turned into a little creek about three in the afternoon. The natives who came down to meet us were a most interesting set. They were a fine, tall, well-built race, with their scalps shaved, except for a little circular clump of about 4 inches in diameter on the top, in the middle of which a disc was fastened, holding a pointed piece of hippo ivory about the size of a finger. In front of this was a little conical erection, 2 inches wide at the base and 3 inches high. It looked something like a candle extinguisher, and was made of felted human hair, ornamented with circlets of straw or bone. This was fastened to the growing clump of hair by a band, composed of pieces of ivory or bone cut in the shape of teeth. Some had, in addition, an outer circle of little tufts of hair round the head.

Their bodies were tattooed and marked in the usual blistered manner. Brass and iron bracelets

were worn on the upper arm, some being so tight that the limb above and below was badly swollen. Round their waists, or a little lower, they wore a quantity of thin twisted grass, having the appearance *en masse* of a deep band. Below that hung a strip of beautiful terra-cotta-coloured leather.

I talked to them for some considerable time, and offered to buy one of the head-dresses and an earring. They were loath to part with their ornaments, and wished to handle the money for the head-dress, to be sure I intended to pay them, before they took the pains to wrench off the earring. I gave them a rupee, which was untold wealth to them, and the promise of another for the earring overcame their reluctance to part with the finery.

Our camp was rather too near the river, and the insects were so troublesome that I soon retired to bed and the protection of my mosquito net. I lay and read for some time, to the accompaniment of shouts and laughter from the adjacent village, grunts of hippos, and various other sounds from the animal and insect world in general.

The next morning, when the boys were taking down my mosquito net and getting the bed out of the tent, in order to get it packed while I was dressing, there was a sudden scampering and jumping about. When I inquired what was wrong John replied, "We have trodden on moles," but I soon found out that he meant ants. There were hundreds of them on the



ground near the end of the bed. They were of a species that bite badly, and were making a determined attack on the men's bare feet. I had as many as possible swept out quickly, and hastened to get on my boots.

Ever since hearing a story told me by the missionary's wife at Kawimbe, I had dreaded these insects. The incident she described occurred soon after her arrival in Africa, and when she was on her way across the plateau for the first time. One night she was disturbed by a horrible sensation of something crawling on her, and hastily aroused her husband, who at once realised the nature of the invasion, and decided on as speedy a flight as possible. They hurriedly vacated their quarters, arrayed only in their night garb, and had to keep warm, as best they could, by the camp fire until the invading army of insects had passed through the tent. The ground was black with myriads of Nkalanda ants, which have earned for themselves the name "soldier ants," because they march like a regiment until they come to any obstacle; then, although their ranks may become somewhat disorganised, they never deviate from their course. They keep straight on, whatever the obstruction may be, and sometimes come in such numbers, that if a house impedes their way, it may take two or three days before the entire army has passed through it. By the end of that time everything in the way of vermin has been entirely exterminated. Even animals as large as cats and dogs

meet the same fate if the ants are able to gather upon them unawares.

There is a native saying, "The Nkalanda kills the elephant"; and another, expressing how quietly they come upon you, "Nkalano kasikolo" ("Trouble does not cough"). This is in contradistinction to the native custom of always coughing, or making some such noise, before entering a hut or house.

This ant does no hurt to furniture, as it prefers flesh to wood. One of them chanced to get on me once, and its bite was just like the prick of a sharp needle. There is also a tiny, tiny ant, which can work its way into anything, and I was continually finding my flour, and more particularly my tin of powdered milk, crowded with the dead bodies of these little horrors, and it was a most vexatious business to get rid of even a portion of them.

Another species, the white ant, however useful in the economy of nature, is to the ordinary traveller an ever-present nuisance. Its ravages confront one at every turn, and woe betide the thoughtless wearer who flings his boots carelessly on the ground and leaves them there for the night. When he wakes in the morning they may be gnawed to pieces, and as he lifts them, the tops will probably part from the soles. It is owing to the depredations of this busy insect that it is impossible to travel with any but tin boxes. A leather trunk would most likely be useless in less than a week. In fact the mischief worked by them, in all forms, is incalculable.

Ant-hills are a marked feature of the African landscape, and are sometimes so large that they can be seen for miles. The earth thus thrown up contains certain ingredients which make it particularly suitable for the manufacture of bricks, or for any purpose where a hard substance is required. At Karonga I saw them making a tennis court with it; the earth was mixed with water into a thick paste and then spread on the ground, and women, with babies tied to their backs, were smoothing it over with their hands.

The river on the morning of the third day was like a sheet of glass. Everything looked delightful, with the sun rising and a steamy vapour ascending from the water. The scenery had improved considerably, and now and then we came to some extremely pretty reaches. The bird life, as on the Zambesi, was a most interesting feature of the river. Birds which hitherto I had only been accustomed to see in the Zoological Gardens, such as egrets, flamingoes, storks, and crested cranes were as plentiful as sparrows at home. Human beings were decidedly scarce. We only saw two or three natives in canoes during the eight days we were on the river between Butiaba and Nimuli.

A few fish would occasionally jump out of the water, or a crocodile glide stealthily into it, from the bank. Otherwise, day after day, the silence was only broken by the quaint, soft singing of the boatmen as they timed the dip of their paddles to the rhythm of their song.

We were taking a number of chickens to Wadelai, and now and again one would escape, and the boat had to be stopped to capture it, which created a slight diversion.

Towards mid-day we passed through Lake Carmachi, which translated, means "Ruby." It certainly is brilliant like a jewel, and is studded with verdant islands. A few miles beyond, we espied Wadelai and were soon alongside the little landing-stage, where a white hand was extended to help me ashore.

This belonged to the engineer who was superintending the repairs of the Upper Nile fleet, which is composed of, to begin with the smallest, the *Good Intent*, the *James Martin*, a rather larger boat, and the little steam launch *Kenia*, which looked very undignified lying on its side, high and dry, under reparation.

A much larger steamer, with passenger cabins, was to be added to these before long, which will make travelling on that section of the river delightful.

Only a few days before, there had been two engineers at this station, but in the short space of time which had elapsed since the doctor whom I met at Butiaba had passed through, the second had succumbed to the fever which lurks in tropical marshes, and especially along this river-bank.

The survivor was broken-hearted. It is painful enough in any circumstances to lose a friend, but to be all alone with a sick comrade, without hope of medical aid, to nurse him with ever-sinking hopes,

helpless to watch him die, and then, alone indeed, to make his coffin and bury him—this surely was an experience which must leave an indelible mark on any man. The strain on this poor fellow, I could see, had been enormous. He had felt the lack of human sympathy acutely, and I think the arrival of a countrywoman, to whom he could tell his tragic tale, was a tremendous relief to him.

One has to come in close touch with such pathetic incidents, to realise what life is for men placed in isolated positions, and how dependent we really all are upon each other.

There is a collector at this station, but he, unfortunately, happened to be away at the time of this occurrence.

It was about 2 p.m. when we arrived, and at that hour it was a very hot walk up to the engineer's house; but once there, a refreshing draught of lime juice and water tasted like nectar.

I was allowed to take possession for the night of two rooms left vacant by the collector at his house close by. I spent most of the day with the engineer, who took me in the evening to see a wild elephant which was living in the valley below. During the heat of the day he retired to the water or the shelter of the thicker grass, but morning and evening he was always to be seen in the comparative open. He was more than a mile away, but through a field-glass I could distinctly see him feeding, and occasionally throwing up his trunk. He was an old bull who had been turned out of the

harem and doomed to pass his remaining days in solitude. My host was thirsting for his blood, or rather tusks, and would have liked to make those "remaining days" few; but he said that although the animal was so distinctly seen from the heights, when once the hunter was down among the papyrus grass, which is sometimes 20 feet high, it was extremely difficult and very dangerous to locate the beast, and might take longer than he had time to spare.

After the evening meal we sat outside the little shanty and chatted until it was time for me to return to my own abode.

During a short, wakeful interval in the night I could distinctly hear the distant roar of a lion, and congratulated myself that I was safe in a building and not left to the slender protection of a bit of canvas.

The following morning my boys told me that they had heard lions as early as eight o'clock the previous evening, which made me wonder what I should have felt like, had I heard them myself while I was walking from the one shanty to the other; or, worse still, what I should have done had I encountered one. But there! if one wants a moment's peace of mind while in Central Africa, all speculation on the chances of such events must be avoided.

I left Wadelai with my larder well replenished with a leg of mutton—about enough for two meals—six live chickens, and a bottle of fresh milk. The

chickens were carried in a coop, and were turned out when we camped to pick up what they could. I am afraid it was very little, and when they were killed, there was not as much flesh on their bones as there is on a small pigeon at home.

A few miles further down, on the other side of the river, I got a glance at the Belgian Wadelai, founded by Emin Pasha. None of the buildings he erected remain, but the parapets and trenches are still in existence.

The river just there was alive with crocodiles and hippos, and had it been safe, I should have gone near enough to get some photographs of the latter. As a rule they flee from man, but if by chance we had disturbed a sleeping herd, some might have struck the boat in sheer terror. Moreover, the elderly males who, like the elephant at Wadelai, have been expelled from the community, are not always too sweet-tempered, and would butt at almost anything that came in their way. One morning two or three made a dive from the side of the river, and I quite expected they were coming for our boat, and urged the men to go quicker, which seemed to amuse them very much. They are such an extremely irresponsible set, and take very few precautions themselves until it is too late.

Birds were now to be seen in increased numbers. Sometimes the trees for a quarter of a mile would be white with cranes; they would wait until we got close to them before they took flight, and when they did it was a sight to remember.

The course of the river had become very winding, and I frequently had to change from one side of the boat to the other to evade the sun. The scenery continued fine, and its beauty was now enhanced by a range of hills running parallel to the river.

The body of water had subdivided into many streams. We kept to the one nearest the Belgian side, which at times was as narrow as a small river at home.

The men worked well, and we tied up fairly early. The village was the most squalid and objectionable I had met with, and I was horrified to find that the tent had to be placed within the village enclosure, in proximity to the filthy huts. I remonstrated, and wanted to have it pitched outside ; but at that suggestion there was a great outcry, and I gathered it was quite impracticable on account of wild beasts. Our only safety, it appeared, lay inside the stockade.

Mosquitoes swarmed, and I quite expected that an attack of fever or typhoid would follow a night spent there. In the evening John told me that the *nympala* wished to know if I were willing to make an early start in the morning, and I said I certainly was, as I felt the sooner we got away the better. The inhabitants seemed very poor and frightfully depressed. Most of them were in their birthday dress, without even the addition of a bead. A few affected a crystal or glass tube about 3 inches long, protruding through a hole in the lower lip, and one or two women wore small bead aprons.



Some of the children after a time summoned up enough interest and energy to come and see what I was doing, and as I happened to be eating some biscuits, I offered them a few, but they did not seem to know what to do with them. They looked at them very suspiciously, as if they thought they were squibs, or something explosive that would go off with a bang. At last one was persuaded to try, and as no evil befel him, the others became courageous and all clamoured for some. Even the men came round for a share, although they only dared to take a nibble.

As suggested by the *nymphala* we were up at four the next morning, and made an early start. I was very glad when we were clear of the place. I had contracted a sore throat and felt generally rather done up, which was not to be wondered at; for although the river was delightful, the fact of being in such cramped quarters in the boat for so many hours together was very fatiguing, and it would have been infinitely more agreeable if we could have landed each day for lunch and a short rest. Poor Maffi did not like it either, although he managed to get a little exercise sniffing about for rats under the bundles. I felt very weary, and anxious to get to camp early that day, so I bribed the men by a promise of three cigarettes between them, if they got there in good time. It does not sound much of an inducement, but it was quite enough to make them work with a will, and we landed early in the afternoon.

The tent was pitched in a clean, open space, and there was no village near. Just as I got out of the boat, and was standing on the bank, a huge island floated past. This is not an uncommon sight on the Nile. Large portions of the banks get detached from the firmer ground by rough weather, and the rushes or grass, acting as sails, catch the wind and float them into the current, which carries them along until they chance to run against some projection, or drift into some quiet nook or corner of the river.

Near our camp that night, hippos in great numbers were to be heard, and mingled with their snortings were the gabbling of the porters, who were very garrulous, but I did not check their flow of language, hoping it would be effectual in scaring away the animals.

Next day we followed a beautiful distant range of hills situated in Belgian territory. For the first time there was a gentle breeze, so that we sailed for the greater part of the day. The men were full of fun, and had some great joke among themselves over which they went into fits of laughter. They were a very merry and amenable set.

At one time they amused themselves by imitating some one speaking through a telephone, which they had doubtless become familiar with at Mombasa. One clicked a ring at the side of a boat, and after a pause said, "Ye-e-s, ye-e-e-es." Then, with a keen look on his face as if he were listening to some one, paused again, and then repeated "Ye-e-e-es";

finishing up with "All right, goodbye." His mimicry was really very clever.

They now considered my bribe of three cigarettes a daily event, so about an hour before the day's work was over the chorus of their songs was influenced by the thought uppermost in their minds, and they chanted, "Give me cigaretti, one cigaretti"; and I answered in the same strain, "At the campi, at the campi."

When we landed some men came to meet us, decorated with a few ivory bracelets, and little brass rings all round their ears, but absolutely innocent of any apparel. It was only on the Nile between Albert Nyanza and Nimuli that I came in close contact with such a thoroughly Eden-esque tribe. Very few white people, and those only within the last few years, have seen this stretch of the river. The early explorers—Sir Samuel Baker included—quitted the water at Gondokoro and struck across country until they encountered the Victoria Nile above the Murchison Falls. I found it the most interesting and unique portion of the river both as regards natives, birds, and scenery.

## CHAPTER XXV

### NIMULI

Comfortable quarters—Difficulty in getting porters—Final tramp—The Assua—Moonlight night—Disquieting reports—Robbers—An unexpected bath—English officer arrives—Impromptu law court—Go out to dinner—The Kit—Another dinner

FORMERLY the landing-stage for Nimuli was on the Nile, but since the settlement has been placed higher on the hill, the boats turn off from the main stream into the Swasa, and discharge their cargo or passengers a few hundred yards up. It is a fort or Government station and the military headquarters of the Nile Province. The Lines are well situated on a hill whence there is a lovely view of the surrounding country, including a grand range of mountains 3,000 feet high.

The station is considered rather more healthy now than it was formerly, but I fancy it will never be noted as a health resort—in fact, the whole of the Nile Province is thought to be the most unhealthy portion of the Uganda Protectorate.

There were six or seven white men in various

appointments at the time I passed through. There is a moderate-sized native village with a broad main street, lined with the stores of Indian traders.

The collector was on *sofari*, but had kindly left word that his house was at my disposal. It was delightful, after the hot walk of a mile from the river, to lounge for a time in the coolest part of the broad verandah in a delightfully cushioned chair. My absent host had left his own table appointments for my use, and the elegant cut-glass, silver, and china, made a delightful change after days of eating and drinking from enamelled ware. He had also left one of his boys to see that I had all I required.

The Nile is not navigable between Nimuli and Gondokoro, so that preparations had now to be made for another overland portion of the journey. The horrors of washing-day had to be faced, and by rearranging my "chop" boxes I was able to reduce the number by one, and so make a load less. Thus the two days I remained at Nimuli were very fully occupied.

I had afternoon tea with the officer in charge at the Lines, and afterwards walked to the gardens, where I was intensely interested in the altered aspect of the Nile as it flowed past them. It had become so extraordinarily contracted, that it required considerable credulity to believe that it was really the whole of the mighty river which was thus tumbling over rocks, boulders, or anything that

obstructed its course, dashing on for about 2 miles northward through a narrow defile perhaps not more than 30 yards in width. Then, with its accumulated strength, it thrusts its way through the still narrower gorge of the Fola Rapids, a quarter of a mile long, after which its course is continuously interrupted by rocks and islands until within a few miles of Gondokoro, whence navigation again becomes practicable. It was a marvellous sight, and worth going many miles to look upon. The evening I saw it, its beauties were enhanced a thousandfold by a glorious sunset.

There was considerable difficulty in getting porters here, for a large number of men had recently crossed the river to the Congo State, possibly because they had heard of work there, and it was only by the courtesy of the Government officials that I was enabled to get enough to bear me on my way. They kindly lent me the 33 or 34 carriers I required, and supplied me with four policemen as escort. Thus our caravan, including the boys, again numbered about 40 all told.

The policemen's uniform consisted of calico knickers, grey putties, blue knitted jersey, with leather on the shoulders for the rifle to rest upon, and straps like leather braces to hold up the belt containing a bayonet, cartridges, &c., and on their heads they wore a red fez with a tassel. There is scarcely any perceptible difference between their rig-out and that of a native soldier.

I was decidedly happy in having succeeded so

far in my venture, and rejoiced to think that I was about to commence the last stage of the journey which was likely to offer any difficulty. At the same time I knew it was unwise to holla before I was out of the wood, as the native raiding parties, who occasionally come from as far as Abyssinia, were giving a great deal of trouble along the route I had to take.

The authorities were out from all directions with soldiers trying to capture the offenders. I hoped with all my heart that the marauders would not cross my path, as they were reported to be a wild set who would stick at nothing.

At last the morning dawned when I was to commence my final tramp overland. We were all astir early, and when we were ready, the loads were allotted to the men and we made a start. The morning, as usual, was glorious, and we passed through low-rolling country over rural footpaths; but I must confess to having dozed during the early part of the day. Some people say they can sleep for hours in a hammock. I have never succeeded to that extent, but I could as a rule get a thorough rest for mind and body by lying quietly with closed eyes, and I found the gentle swaying movement very soothing to the nerves.

Two large tributaries of the Nile intersect the tract of country we were passing through, and had they been in flood it would have been utterly impossible for me to have got on, but fortunately I hit upon the psychological moment, and we

found they had dwindled down to quite passable streams.

Four hours' march from Nimuli brought us to the first of these, namely, the Assua, at a point about half a mile from its junction with the Nile, and as the channel was only a quarter its usual size, we crossed it without the least difficulty. This river drains many hundreds of miles of country through which it passes. Its bed is much obstructed by rocks, and during the rainy season, owing to its declivity, the stream is very rapid, and it was easy to understand the impossibility of crossing it at such a time. It is a convenient provision of nature, that such rivers should have their exhausted season and become passable at certain times of the year.

We pitched our camp on the other side, quite near to the bank, which gave me a chance of frequently returning to the river, to watch the varied and delightful effects produced by the sun upon the water until it sank, a literal ball of fire, leaving a red glow to merge into the silvery light of a glorious full moon.

At the risk of repeating myself, I am impelled to say there is a peculiar charm about such moonlight nights, and one cannot adequately describe what a joy they are after the heat and toil of the day. The whole scene that night was perfectly entrancing; there were seven or eight camp fires, surrounded by groups of men in naturally assumed artistic attitudes, and the low murmur of their conversation, was





ESCORT OF NATIVE POLICE



CROSSING THE ASSUA



THE GONDOKORO POLICE



as slow music to a scene on the stage. Strange to say, the atmosphere was beautifully cool, and there was a total absence of mosquitoes. My boys were taking advantage of this, and would have sat up all night had I permitted it, but after repeatedly telling them to hurry up with their cooking and get to rest, I had to read the Riot Act.

Merely telling them to do a thing, when they know the order is not likely to be backed up by a good thrashing if not obeyed, has very little effect sometimes. However, I felt I must maintain my authority somehow, so I kicked over their fire, and they had to go supperless to bed. It taught them a lesson, and they bestirred themselves in the morning.

Before leaving it, I had a last look at the river, and was more than repaid for going a little out of my way. The effect of dawn was totally different from any I had seen the previous day. The early morning air being so much lower in temperature than the water, caused a thick vapour to arise from the surface of the stream, as from a boiling chaldron, and the island that lay in mid-stream, a little way up its course, looked phantom-like in the mist.

I thoroughly enjoyed my morning walk, and as I sauntered on, I watched the moon sinking lower and lower as it glided away after its night vigil, giving place to the sun, which rose in all its majesty and glory. It soon made its power felt, and compelled me to seek shelter under the cover of my hammock.

The road in parts was quite wide and cleared of all undergrowth, but in places this clearing ceased abruptly, and we knew we were passing from the territory under the supervision of one chief, to that of another. We then had to drag our way through grass 7 to 8 feet high. Usually by January all the grass fires are over, but for some unaccountable reason they were particularly late that year. In travelling, the drawback of such high grass is that it not only adds very much to the heat, but it also prevents one from seeing the surrounding country.

The natives in this part were of a tribe which still considers the birthday dress all-sufficient, and had nothing to worry about in the way of fashion. The highest effort in that direction was perhaps a consideration of the latest mode in lip ornaments, or the question of how many rings the brass bracelet should be composed.

I was placed somewhat in a dilemma that afternoon, by some information collected by the native escort, and translated to me by John. They announced that the road we were to follow the next day was not safe. They had heard, they said, that it "abounded with many murderers and robbers."

Of course this was not pleasant hearing, and the fact, with which I was already acquainted, that such gentry were known to be in the district, lent an air of possibility to the story. The police suggested that we should take another route, but on reflection I decided to brave it out, and not deviate from the

usual course. I thought if there should be serious trouble, which would render succour necessary, the collector, who knew I had started, would send out assistance, and naturally expect to find me on the ordinary road; whereas if I followed the advice of the escort, he would not know where to seek me.

That night, as a precaution, I made the police sleep close to the side of my tent with their rifles ready for any emergency, and the next day one marched immediately in front and another behind my hammock. The inhabitants of the villages through which we passed were not "the robbers" but the victims. These unfortunate creatures might be peacefully watching their cattle grazing, when the villainous marauders would swoop down upon them, like eagles on their prey. They carry off the women, kidnap the children, murder any who resist them, seize and drive off all the animals, and take as much of the produce as they can get, leaving the poor villagers desolate.

We had not gone far when a lesser chief, or headman, met us on the road, and said he wished to salute me. He brought me a bottle of milk and some eggs, which I was always glad to get, but at that time, when the weather was too hot to even think of meat, they were doubly appreciated.

The old man followed our party for some miles. He was dressed in a terra-cotta-coloured blanket, fastened over one shoulder, and wore a thick ivory armlet above the elbow; on his wrist he had a bracelet of large blue-white beads, and round his

neck one or two iron necklaces or bands, with charms hanging therefrom, all of which were quite in keeping, but the general effect was marred and made ridiculous by a dirty double *terai* hat, which no doubt had seen better days—no, to say years—before it came into his possession. This was perched on the top of his head, and the brim bent down all round, which made it look still more dilapidated.

For some reason—possibly to get nearer the village and consequently their food—my men were very anxious that day to get off the beaten track, and camp where they knew it was not my intention to halt. They made one or two futile attempts to deceive me, but fortunately I had been provided with a very explicit list of the exact distances between each camping-ground, so I could make calculations as to my whereabouts. When they turned off from the road and wished to stop, I was sure we had not come to the right place, and that we ought not to be leaving the main track. When I insisted on going on, they tried to frighten me by saying it would be at least three hours more before we came to water.

I had my doubts, so I tried a little “bluff” and said, “Very well then, we will go on for three hours.” Of course it would have been very appalling if their assertion had proved correct, but my surmise turned out to be right, for in less than half an hour we came to the proper place, and found plenty of water. It is very necessary to be watchful with

such people, otherwise there is no knowing how far one might be led astray.

When the old chief had seen us settled down for the day I gave him some salt, and he went away very delighted with his little outing. Several more arrived to salute me, and for the first time all apparently expected me to shake hands with them. Such peculiarly European customs among natives somewhat jar upon me, and I wish they would retain their own quaint and often dignified forms of salutation.

The heat along the Nile is intense even by 8 a.m., but soon after there is generally a little breeze which makes it bearable for a few hours. Towards mid-day that same breeze becomes as hot as if it had passed through a furnace, and I had to cover my face to shield myself from it.

In the afternoon the only possible way to keep alive until the heat abated somewhat, was to lie perfectly still and doze away the time.

After we left Nimuli the nights were pleasantly cool, and I was always obliged to pull a blanket over me in the early morning. The absence of mosquitoes made the evenings delightful, and I could sit out and ruminate by the camp fire as late as I wished.

The early morning effects were always worth noticing. Once, when the atmosphere was particularly clear, the distance looked as if it were composed of so much mother-of-pearl, while the next day the effect was totally different, and if one could be called a pearl grey morning the other might be termed "russet."

A great many of the trees were leafless, and those that were not, had been singed brown and yellow by the grass fires. The charred grass assumes a very pretty colour in the distance, and the whole combines to make a picture similar to an English wood in the autumn.

I had a cooling experience one day that was quite unexpected. I had, as usual, provided myself with a bottle of barley-water, which was placed beside me in the hammock, and the cork and bottle having, I suppose, a slight difference, they parted company, and I was saturated by the escaping liquid. However, such was the solitary state of the road that I just sent the men on ahead, while I divested myself of the wettest garments and hung them on the bushes. Then I turned myself round to the sun as if I were on a meat jack, and in a few minutes all was as dry as if nothing had happened.

Our camp that day was under a large tree, so fortunately there was ample shade, but as I lay in my deck-chair and gazed languidly round, everything was as still as if it were paralysed in the brazen heat. Later in the afternoon things assumed a more natural appearance, and we began to live again. The murmur of the men reached me from the distance, as they sat and chatted in their little friendly cliques, whilst preparing their evening meal, and the nearer it got to readiness the more their tongues were unloosed, until, while they were enjoying it, there was a complete babel.



While having my bath I suddenly heard a great commotion outside, and then a noise as of soldiers being drilled. At first I thought it was my own men amusing themselves in that way, as they sometimes did, but when it was followed by the hasty hammering of tent pegs, and general tumult all round, I felt that something unusual was in the wind, so I called to John to know what it all meant. He informed me that an English officer was expected soon with about a hundred native soldiers, and the advance guard had arrived, and were preparing the camp.

This was very exciting news for me, and I hurried on with my ablutions. A few minutes later, on emerging from my tent, I found myself face to face with the captain, and I learned from him that he had been up-country in search of the raiders, and was now returning to Nimuli, as his men were to be replaced by police.

Our two camp tables were placed together for dinner that evening, and looked quite festive. Such an unexpected meeting of white skins was very agreeable to both, and we thought the occasion warranted the opening of a bottle of liqueur. One does not carry superfluous appointments on sofari, but among my belongings was a liqueur glass, which had been bought as the only thing small enough for the native eggs, while my compatriot, possessed a real egg-cup, so my glass reverted to its original use, and his egg-cup was promoted to hold liqueur.

We drank each other's health, and sat and talked

round the camp fire until ten o'clock, a desperately late hour for these parts.

The next morning at dawn we were both on our way in opposite directions, the officer returning with his soldiers to Nimuli, while I pursued my way to Gondokoro.

Whenever differences arose among the members of my caravan, the matter was at once laid before me for settlement. I had to give judgment in so many cases, that I thought by the time I reached England I should certainly have graduated for the magistracy, or at least a Justiceship of the Peace.

That afternoon a youth came to my tent in great excitement—and parenthetically I may remark that that was all he did come in—and I saw by the agitated manner in which he saluted me that something had gone wrong, so I called John to act as interpreter, and the case was gone into there and then.

It transpired after much talking, that the policemen had been playing some kind of gambling game, and one of them, in a generous mood, had promised the boy, that if he won, he would give him a present of four pice (one penny) or a piece of red calico, which was being frantically waved in the "court" during the argument. It appeared that the policeman won and then refused to fulfil his promise to the youth, who was determined to stand up for his due, and had all the assurance of manner given by the knowledge that he had right on his side.

After due consideration a verdict was given for the plaintiff, and a severe caution to the defendant not

to gamble again while he was in my service. They then retired; the policeman indifferent, the boy triumphant, and the court adjourned until the next case. These appeals became so frequent that I began to think a notice over my tent door, "Judgments while you wait," would not be inappropriate.

Owing to the determination of the Government authorities to suppress the disgraceful crimes perpetrated against the people, by raiding parties, several officials were out in search of the delinquents along the route I was following, and this circumstance had very pleasant consequences for me. My journey, which in the ordinary way might have been rather monotonous, was diversified and enlivened by meeting at intervals, detachments of soldiers or police under one or other of the officials, and besides the pleasure of social intercourse, a feeling of safety added greatly to my comfort.

Two days after I had parted from the officer who was returning with his men, I arrived at the camp of the collector of Nimuli. He was stationary for a time, waiting to be reinforced by police from his own district as well as from Gondokoro. His tent had been removed from the ordinary camping-place, which lay more than a mile beyond on lower ground, but he walked that distance with me, and after inviting me to dinner that evening said *au revoir*.

I had a good rest in the afternoon, and when I began to bestir myself again I found it was time to dress for dinner. Later I regretted that there was no

moon, but perhaps the scene was rather more weird, and lent itself better to imagination without it. In the darkness I could picture herds of elephants just a little way from our path, and in the thicket lions, leopards, and hyenas watching us.

It was a queer little procession that formed to wend its way upward. I had on quite a respectable delaine gown, and not having been so grandly attired for some time, I felt rather overdressed, but hoped the rarity of the entertainment would justify my costume.

John lighted my path with the hurricane lamp, and two policemen with fixed bayonets marched in front and two behind. It was quite half an hour's walk to the camp, and I had to go carefully, picking my way over large circular ruts formed by the impress of elephants' feet during the recent wet season.

At last we could distinguish lights flickering here and there among the foliage, and on arrival I found the dinner-table set beneath a tree in the open. Close by it a large fire was burning, which, if not necessary for warmth, added a picturesque touch to the scene, and also kept all mosquitoes and other objectionable insects at a distance. In the absence of a sideboard the wine was placed on an empty provision case, which later on was requisitioned as a seat for the host.

The dinner began with elephant soup. The outer leather part of a foot of the animal from which it had been produced, was standing before

the fire full of ashes, which would remain in it a few days to cleanse and preserve it. The animal in question was not a large one, the tusks being worth only about £50. The value of elephant ivory is roughly estimated at 8s. to 10s. per pound.

After the soup, which was excellent, we had tinned fish and tomato sauce, followed by cutlets of elephant's foot, served with a delicious brown gravy. The meat was very rich and solid, and tasted rather like a species of terrapin, which I had once eaten in the West Indies, served up as a pie baked in its own shell. Curry was the next item on the *menu*, which led on to banana fritters and coffee. The dinner was a great achievement on the part of the cook, and demonstrated how much can be done in spite of great difficulties.

We sat under the deep-blue vault of heaven, which scintillated with stars, the glory of which cannot possibly be imagined by those who have never been out of England, and in the absence of the moon they flashed out their gleams to perfection. The fire blazed up at intervals and hid them from our view, but even then we were conscious they were above us. In the distance we could hear the subdued hum of the soldiers' voices, and the peculiar charm of the environment threw a halo of unreality round the whole scene, bringing to my mind descriptions in the "Arabian Nights."

My host had travelled a great deal, so we found much to talk about, and the time passed like a

dream. I was horrified when I looked at my watch and found it was 10.30. It was the kind of evening that should have had no morrow to cut it short, but knowing that the stern reality of another day lay before me, I felt obliged to rise and express my thanks for a "delightful evening," which in this case was no mere repetition as it so often is of a conventional compliment.

We returned to camp in the same order that we came, but with the addition of a second lamp, carried by a coloured man from Mandalay. He was dressed as a sailor, and I discovered that he had been in the Navy eleven years, and spoke English well. He appeared to be the collector's factotum. Men such as he, get stranded at Zanzibar, and afterwards drift over the country in all directions.

On my arrival in camp I found the tent safe, and Maffi, whom I had tied up at the entrance, delighted to see me. The men were all sound asleep in every variety of attitude.

Notwithstanding late hours, I was up next day at five, and we were soon on the march again. As I walked along I could trace the fresh spoor of elephants: the ground was dry, so that the marks were not deep, but judging from the number there must have been large herds in the vicinity, and I longed to be a man to get some sport.

The physical features of the country remained much the same—hills here and there; trees, mostly bereft of leaves, and very few flowers, except the ever-faithful lavender convolvulus.

In a few hours, we got to the Kit, the second large river. Like the Assua, it presented no difficulty in the dry season, but looked as if it could be very formidable in the rains. Another enchanted evening brought the day to a close. I always enjoyed the few hours after sunset: they were so calm, and a deep, satisfying peace seemed to settle on all around. Fireflies flitted about like Will-o'-the-wisps, and occasionally a bat would whisk pass one's face. The only audible sound was the continual croaking of the frogs in the adjacent water.

As I took one last look from my tent door, I could see some of the porters arranging their mats and rugs for the night. Now and then a bronze figure would rise from a recumbent position, and rest for awhile on one elbow, lighted up by the flickering flame of the camp fire, while other still darker forms hovered like ghosts in the background.

The past week had been so free from mosquitoes that I dreaded the time when I should encounter them again, as the little pests, by their nocturnal wanderings, entirely spoilt the best part of the day.

The next morning we were at camp by ten, and not too soon, as the heat was terrific. We found the whole group of rest-huts had been accidentally burnt, but enough of one remained to give me a little shelter until the sun was low enough to cause the tent, to cast sufficient shadow for me to sit in.

Towards noon it was reported to me that the collector from Gondokoro was near, and when he

arrived, he was dumfounded to find an English-woman in possession. He was frightfully hot, poor fellow, having tramped all the 18 miles in one day, which is good marching in such a climate, but he was desirous of getting to the scene of action as soon as possible.

I refreshed him with tea, for which he was more than ready. He had brought the whole of the Gondokoro Constabulary with him—about 25 in all—and they made a very good subject for the camera as they grouped themselves by my tent. After I had taken them, the collector marched them off a few hundred yards to his own camp.

I dined with him that evening and thoroughly enjoyed another "Arabian Nights Entertainment." The thought that the days for such unsophisticated hospitality were numbered, made me feel rather sad, for I knew that in a few days civilisation of a kind would have me in its grip.

As I was not pressed for time, I divided into two marches the distance the collector had covered in one day. The morrow was very sultry, and towards evening we had a very heavy thunder-storm, but we felt we were escaping the worst of it, which proved to be the case, as when we got to Gondokoro the next day, we were told it had been most alarming there. However, it cleared the air and made the heat more bearable.

We struck camp for the last time early in the morning. We then passed through a wild park-like expanse, well wooded, and freer from high



grass than the country we had recently traversed. Numerous villages were in view, and at last we could see the roofs of the soldiers' huts at Gondokoro and the British colours waving a welcome from a high flagstaff.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### GONDOKORO

The rest-house—A caller—The ways of the natives—My guard—  
A valuation—Heat and insects trying—Distribution of old garments  
—A disappointment—Blow No. 2—Smart visitors—The mail at last

GONDOKORO is the most northerly station of the Uganda Protectorate, and the limit of the first navigable stretch of the Nile south of Khartoum. It is delightfully situated on one of the side streams, and when first visited by Speke and Grant, was merely a station used by the ivory traders during a few months in the year. Since then it has developed considerably, and is now a very busy centre, boasting a collector, a Government doctor, an English officer in command of a native regiment, and two Greek traders.

A Government steamer runs monthly between Khartoum and Gondokoro, but only provides accommodation for tourists during January and February, the two months considered the season at Khartoum. At any other time of the year they may travel on the boats, but must provide their own cook and cater for themselves.





REST HOUSE. GONDOKORO



WOMAN GRINDING CORN

Again, quite by a happy chance, I had hit the time exactly for the January boat, so was thus saved the trouble and expense of taking my boys with me.

On my arrival at Gondokoro the collector's Goanese clerk, in the absence of his chief, met me and did the honours. He brought me a budget of ever-welcome letters, and showed me the accommodation at my disposal. It was a brick rest-house, situated on the edge of a cliff close to the water, and commanding a magnificent view of the river and hills beyond. It had formerly been a bandstand, and not being of much service in that capacity, the collector had conceived the idea of converting it to its present use.

To enter it I mounted a flight of seven steps, and was then on a level with the door. The four walls rose from the ground and continued to about 3 feet above the brick floor. Originally the building had eight large arched openings from the wall to the roof, but now those on two sides of the house had been bricked up, and inside, a wall with a door in it had been put up to divide the space into two apartments. Across the remaining openings a thin wire mosquito netting had been stretched, and all the time I was there, I had the feeling that I was living either in a large meat-safe, or a cage at the Zoo.

The effect was very curious when lizards and such creatures crawled across the almost imperceptible netting. Only the underneath part of them

was visible, and they appeared exactly, as if they were walking in space. The ceiling was made of "Americana," and over the top of that also the lizards were constantly scampering. I could just trace the impress of their little pattering feet as they pressed down the material.

I had my bed fixed up in one of the rooms, and, by means of the ground sheet, spread over the brick floor, and my various boxes arranged to form a washstand and dressing-table, I converted the inner compartment into quite a passable bedroom. A deck-chair, and an ordinary one, my travelling table, and another which I found there, furnished the other half of the "meat-safe," and turned it into a dining and drawing-room.

Lado Mountain, from which the Belgian station a little lower down derives its name, was a very conspicuous landmark. There were many isolated hills in sight, which rose from the plain with the curious effect of having been turned out of colossal pudding moulds by a giant hand.

The stream running by the rest-house was nearly half a mile wide, with a rapid current, the speed of which I guessed to be at least 3 miles an hour. On the opposite side was a large island, and a dug-out canoe was kept busy most of the day ferrying the natives backwards and forwards from a landing-stage a little lower down. Their merry laughter, as it was wafted to me over the water, sounded very pleasant, and kept me in touch with humanity.

Amid these surroundings I settled down to wait

patiently for what might turn up in the way of a boat. My porters and policemen were anxious to return without delay to Nimuli, so I had to write at once the various letters which I wished them to take back and deliver to the officials who had been so kind and considerate to me *en route*.

While I was thus occupied, the doctor called, and seeing how busy I was, said he would return later, so I asked him to come to tea, on condition that he brought his own cup and saucer. This he did about four o'clock, and we chatted until it was cool enough to take a little stroll.

We went first to the Greek trader, to arrange about the sale of my goods and chattels. He promised to come the next morning to look over them, and give me an estimate of what he thought they were worth. We were then quite close to the police lines, so we sauntered up and down between the rows of neatly kept dwellings. It was a busy time of day for the womenfolk: their fires were all aglow outside the huts, and on the improvised stone stoves stood large stew-pots, containing the evening meal for the family. If they happened to lift the cover as we passed, we got a whiff of some savoury concoction which was quite appetising. Farinaceous food is the staple support of the natives, but they are not averse from meat when they can get it, as the odour from some of their pots testified. Fish was easily procurable from the river. They prepare their food very carefully, and make the most of what they have. I watched them

bruise some wild herbs between two rounded stones, and then mix them with native butter and what condiments they could get. The mixture was then rolled into balls, making a kind of vegetable dumpling.

Their meal consists of one course only, so that whatever else they had in the way of bananas, sweet potatoes, &c., was boiled in the same pot. Some of the women who had finished their cooking, grouped themselves about a particular friend who was still at work; others were busy plaiting the gorgeously coloured native dyed grasses into baskets of various shapes and sizes.

I carried on conversations with the women by means of signs, but the piccaninnies fled in terror. It was funny to see the curiosity of these little creatures get the better of their fears, and their attempts to get a peep at me from behind a distant hut. If I could manage to turn quickly enough to get round by an unexpected way to surprise them, there was a general howl and scampering in all directions.

After seeing all I wanted, I returned to my first dinner in the "meat-safe." When the lamp had been lighted a short time, the insects became simply unendurable, and all attempts to read were hopeless. They were not mosquitoes, although there were plenty of those outside, but tiny, tiny flies, so infinitesimal, that they easily penetrated the mosquito net of my bed, so even there I was not free from them until the light was extinguished.



Each evening about sunset, four soldiers arrived and went through the usual formalities of placing a guard, and later, when any of the boys or their friends came to the kitchen, which was just by the side of the "safe," I used to hear, in very broken English, "Who goes there?" And the answer "Friend," followed by "Friend, pass on."

The men divided the night into watches of two hours' duration. It was rather embarrassing when they patrolled ~~the~~ house, as there was no kind of curtain or covering whatever for the openings. I managed to get a little privacy in the bedroom by stretching a line across the one there, on which I hung some calico. In the morning the men were gone, and it was delicious having my bath with such an uninterrupted view of the river; it almost felt as if I were bathing in the river itself.

The trader arrived later, made an inventory of all my properties, and quoted the amount he was willing to give for them. This settled, only a short time would be required to effect the transfer when the boat arrived. The articles were all in use, so that I could not part with them until the last moment. It was quite sad to realise that I was ~~selling all that~~ had been "home" to me for the last seven or eight months; and having become so enamoured of my happy nomadic life, I could not bear the idea of relinquishing everything connected with it, to return to a prosaic, everyday existence.

The trader treated me quite fairly, and bought everything, even to my hammock, which I had

quite expected to have left on my hands. It appears that most of the business connection is on the Congo side of the river, and there he would be able to find a ready purchaser for the hammock in one of the big chiefs, or possibly a Greek trader travelling long distances for rubber and ivory.

Owing to the rather strained relations between us and the Belgian Enclave, all communication with the opposite side was cut off, so that just then trade was at its lowest ebb.

The next afternoon I took a walk to the remains of the entrenchments, dug for a protection from the surrounding tribes, by Sir Samuel Baker over forty years ago. A great many lime trees were planted by him during his sojourn here, and I enjoyed and was greatly refreshed by fruit from them every day.

Beneath the Belinian hills, which can be seen distinctly from here, was the scene of a big fight between Sir Samuel Baker's men and the Bari natives, who had attacked him.

Leaving the entrenchments, I walked through the military encampment, the general conditions of which are much the same as those of the police colony, only on a considerably larger scale. The captain in command was away for the week-end, shooting, but he had been thoughtful enough to leave word that fresh milk, potatoes, and tomatoes were to be sent to me each day, also in consequence of an order from the collector, I got a portion of a sheep once or twice a week, so I felt I was in a land of plenty.

The animals, both sheep and goats, are Liliputian in size, and a leg or shoulder hardly sufficed a normal appetite for two meals, while a chicken barely served for one. But small as they were, the supply was kept up, which was all that was necessary.

One evening I wandered out alone, and passing the quarters of a policeman, was invited inside the zareba by some women who were standing at the entrance. My hostess, who was Nubian, wore her hair in hundreds of tiny plaits caked with grease, and over her shoulder was fastened a piece of bright-coloured cotton drapery. She lounged on a deck-chair smoking a long pipe with all the nonchalance possible. She must have been someone of importance in her little coterie, as she and I alone had chairs. The rest of the assembled company either stood or squatted on their heels, and they had the best of the fun. I gathered from their manner and glances, that they were keeping up a running commentary on my appearance and attire.

As I had not brought John with me, I was unable to carry on any conversation, so after watching them for as long as I was interested, I took my leave. One of the company, a very good-looking woman, followed me out, and walked a little way with me. I knew she was longing to know whence I had come and whither I was going, and though I could not explain the former by dumb show, I think I made her understand by much pointing down the river that I was on my way to Khartoum.

Soon our paths diverged, and I have a vivid recollection of her, looking most picturesque with her water pitcher poised on her head, as she turned to go down a side path to the river. Before I finally parted from her I made her say "goodbye," which she did very prettily, and I hope I repeated equally well the same parting salutation which she taught me in her language. I evidently made an impression on her, as the next morning John came to tell me she had called and wished to see me. I invited her up to my room, and she settled herself on the floor to watch me, and I am sure she would have been happy to stay for some hours if I had had time to amuse her.

She had brought me four eggs as a present, and in return I offered her some beads, which I conclude were not the fashion there, as she declined to accept them. When John told her I had nothing else, she said, "Never mind;" she "did not want anything," and I quite believe she had not brought the eggs with the idea of barter, but merely as an excuse for calling upon me. Nevertheless her face lighted up with evident pleasure when I recollected I had cigarettes and offered her some.

As I was soon to be in contact with the fashionable world again, I occupied myself sorting and making ready for use, the clothes which had been packed ever since I left the coast so many months before; but any exertion was a very great effort, for I consider Gondokoro one of the hottest places I met with in Africa, which is accounted for, I

suppose, by it being on a much lower level than most of the country through which I had passed. The heat from about two or three in the afternoon until the same hours in the morning was intense. During the early part of the day there was generally a cool breeze, which made a delightful contrast. In the afternoon my poor little dog used to pant, with his tongue out as far as it would go, and move restlessly from place to place, hoping to find somewhere, a spot cooler than the last.

In the hottest season the temperature rises above 100 degrees in the shade, but fortunately I had left before the thermometer reached such a terrible point. However, on reviewing my experiences, I should describe the heat of Africa as much more bearable than that of India. For a few hours in the day, at certain low altitudes, the heat in Africa may possibly be greater, but there is more rise and fall in the temperature, and one is always sure of *some* cessation of the heat during the twenty-four hours, whereas in India it keeps such a dead level that it may be, and often is, as hot in the night as during the day. But I cannot remember ever being kept awake at night in Africa owing to the heat.

When I had my fresher clothes ready, I had to "bequeath," as it were, to my boys, the garments which had borne the heat and burden of the journey. Assanacio expressed a wish to have my cotton skirt, but as it was such a treasure I told him I could not promise he should have it all, but that they must share it between them. How they

managed to divide it is beyond my ken. Perhaps one bought the others out, or perhaps they shared it and wore the pieces round their heads or waists. There was keen competition for an old black straw hat, which by some means fell to John's lot. I should have thoroughly enjoyed a peep at them on the return journey, decked out in my old things.

It was annoying that the insects were so numerous at Gondokoro, as from sunset they made life in the open impossible. The fireflies were exquisite, and as I watched them through the netting they looked like endless falling stars.

The grass fires were in progress all round, and looking over the river to the smoke rising in front of a glorious sunset, the most beautiful Turner effects were revealed.

It was now January 25th, on which date it was reported an extra tourist boat might arrive. About mid-day I heard a whistle, and rushed to the top of the steps to look out, there I was met by a policeman, who saluted in military style, and said he had been sent to say the boat was coming. The trader also arrived, and wanted to know if he might take his purchases. I, nothing doubting, said yes, and in the twinkling of an eye the place was dismantled. Then it occurred to me that it would perhaps be wise to send John to the little quay, to find out how long the boat would remain, and after a short time he returned with the disappointing intelligence that it was not the expected boat, but one sent up on Government service from a station lower down.

So after all the flurry and excitement, everything had to be brought back and replaced.

I determined not to be in such a hurry next time, and it was well I made this resolve, as four days later we had another false alarm.

John was clearing away the dinner one evening when he suddenly caught sight of the lights of a boat in the far distance. The regular monthly service was due that day, so I felt fully convinced this time, that it was the right boat, and as I was as usual sitting in a cotton wrapper, I felt I must change into a dress before going out to make the necessary inquiries. However, I rather regretted having taken this trouble, for on sallying forth, the first person I met was the captain of the regiment calmly sauntering along in his dressing-gown. Really it was too hot in the evening to support anything else.

We went down to the quay and awaited the arrival of the boat. As it came nearer we could distinguish four or five people at dinner on the upper deck. I could see there were ladies in the party, and felt glad I should have their society.

When the skipper came on shore I asked him if he were prepared to take another passenger, and to my consternation he replied, "I am afraid not."

Visions of either a month's delay or an early grave at Gondokoro rose vividly before me, and I said, "But you must; you are the mail, are you not?"

"Oh no," he said; "this is a private party; the mail will be up to-morrow or the day after."

This was blow number two, but I was glad I had kept the "meat-safe" intact, and had not to face the turmoil of refurnishing again.

The party on board did not see us in the darkness, and showed no signs of coming off, so we returned to our respective shanties. The only satisfaction I had gained was the knowledge that the mail really was on its way, and might reasonably be expected in a few days.

The next day the collector sent a soldier to take me to the site where Sir Samuel and Lady Baker had their encampment and lived for so many months. It was situated a mile or more from the present settlement of Gondokoro, and a palm tree, said to have been planted by the heroic couple, marks the spot.

On the way I passed close to several villages, which were well kept and presented a tidy and clean appearance. Although one would scarcely call the people dirty, I think the habitations were cleaner than the individuals. The men are tall and well proportioned; neither sex wear much clothing. A small bead apron or a piece of leather forms a complete toilette. They shave their hair and eyebrows, and smear their bodies all over with a brick-red pigment, which gives them the appearance of animated terra-cotta figures. This colouring is made from a peculiar clay, which they bake until it is reduced to powder; they then mix



it with a little grease, to make it adhere to their bodies.

This race—the Bari—number about 100,000, and are divided into various tribes, some of the chief being the Fajein, Lighi, Mandari, Shir, Kuko, and Leria. They were formerly considered very warlike and hostile, but have since become quite friendly and amenable to the laws that govern them, and give very little trouble to the present administration. Twins are considered very unlucky by these people, and when they are born, the unfortunate mother is sent back to her father, and part of the dowry is returned. They do not intermarry much with other people, and are distinguished for their independent spirit.

When I returned from my walk I found that the passengers from the steamer were on shore sight-seeing. They proved to be some French people, who had chartered a boat at Khartoum, and come up the Nile for big game shooting. They had left several of their party lower down, while they proceeded onwards to see all there was to be seen. They came to call upon me, and were very much surprised and interested to learn that I had come alone from the Cape. They could hardly believe it possible.

It seemed strange to me, after so many months of roughing it, to meet with once more, not only gloves and veils, but the latest *mode* from Paris, whence my visitors had recently come. By comparison I felt I must look—what I was—a perfect tramp.

That afternoon they steamed away, leaving me in solitude to scan the distance, perhaps for days, for the approach of another boat.

On January 31st the mail really made its appearance. For some time we could see the smoke above the reeds, and by it, trace the course of the steamer, winding through the channels in the sudd, but it was not until she was almost in the stream in front of us that we could actually see her. She only got alongside about noon, and on boarding her, I found the accommodation excellent. I chose my cabin, and then returned to the rest-house to make final arrangements for the return of the boys, &c.

Parting with Maffi nearly broke my heart; he had been my friend and protector for so many months. The boys were to take him back to the collector at Nimuli, who had expressed a wish to have him. I took farewell of him with such a lump in my throat, that I could scarcely ask the boys to take him away and tie him up so that I should not see him again. It left a fearful blank for many a day, and I hardly realised until I missed him, what an affectionate little companion he had been.

The passengers on the boat consisted of an English lady and two men, one English, the other American. The ordinary tourist from the north does not, as a rule, get beyond Khartoum, but I believe the two boats plying in the season generally have one or two passengers for the trip to Gondo-

koro and back. The American remarked to me that he ha'd been rather fancying himself for being enterprising enough to come by a "train de luxe" to Khartoum, and thence by a "bateau de luxe" to Gondokoro, but he added, "All the wind was taken out of my sails when I arrived and found you waiting for the boat, after coming right through from the Cape."



# THE SOUDAN

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE NILE

The steamer—Lado—Mongalla—New C.M.S. station—Herd of seventeen elephants—Barge life—The Sudd—The White Nile—Taufikia—Fashoda or Kodok—The Shilluks—Feast of Bairam—The Blue and White Nile meet

AS we steamed away from Gondokoro, I snapped a last souvenir of the three white officials waving their adieux from the little avenue of pepper trees, which leads to the small landing-stage. My late abode looked charming from the water. I watched it until it was out of sight, and then turned away regretfully, knowing the last link with my vagrant life had been severed; but I tried to comfort myself with the reflection, that it was pleasant to feel at ease, and free from the suspense that at any moment I might have to encounter some unforeseen danger from man or beast.

I was very glad, however, that the reintroduction to civilisation was not too abrupt. The boat was better than I expected to find it, but it is not

suitably built for the prevailing climate.' It was impossible to get a current of air through the cabins, consequently they were never cool; their roof, too, consisted of only the one layer of planks forming the upper deck, whereas there should have been two, with a space between. As it was, the sun, blazing full on the deck all day, turned the state-rooms beneath, into veritable ovens, and it must have been utterly impossible for any one to sleep in the upper bunk. I kept my cushions up there, and the first day when I went to fetch one, it was so hot that I had to drop it suddenly, and made a search to see if the place was on fire. Also the fittings in my dressing-bag on the floor, were positively burning to the touch.

The nights on that part of the Nile were the hottest I had experienced, and the heat during the day was sometimes almost unendurable. There was great competition for the only cool spot on the boat, up in the fore part.

Two barges were attached at the side of the steamer, in the usual way. On the upper deck of one, was the Nile Post Office. It was rather near to my berth, and I wished it anywhere else, as it kept off a great deal of the air for which I was gasping.

It was a great relief to my mind to have good Indian servants in place of my untrained and incompetent "boys;" and to see glass, china, and cutlery in, what appeared to me, such profusion, was a great delight. The luxury of ice was almost incredible.





LADO. BELGIAN STATION



CURIOUS STYLES OF HAIR



Food in plenty, and cooked by a *chef* was a delightful change after the frugality of camp life, and I must say I was just in a fit state to enjoy the "fleshpots of Egypt."

It took me a little while to settle down to my new surroundings, but in time I found even they, as most things in this world, had their compensations.

Soon after leaving Gondokoro we passed the Belgian station of Lado, and my ill-luck as regards landing on Belgian territory still dogged my footsteps. Owing to the strained relations, already alluded to, between the Belgian and our Home Government, the boat did not, as it would otherwise have done, put in at any of their stations, but the captain kindly risked sticking in the shallower water, and took us down the stream nearest to the settlement, so that I might get a good view of it. It looked extremely nice and well kept, and I much regretted that we could not land.

Another few hours brought us to Mongalla, the first British station in the Soudan. The captain in command, and his brother, who was visiting him, dined on board. As a rule the former is the only white officer stationed there, and I repeat my conviction that it is not right to allow one white man to be exposed to the dangers, not only of sickness, but of the possible rising of so many armed black soldiers, and I will quote one instance connected with this very station.

Before we left, four rebels, well handcuffed,

were placed on one of the barges, to be taken to Khartoum for trial, and a guard of three soldiers stood over them day and night until they arrived there. The current report was that one fellow had shot at the commander, and though he missed him, he wounded a native officer, who was standing behind, and on seeing this, he shot himself. The prisoners we were taking to Khartoum were associates of his, and had been heard to say "they would do the same if they had the chance." It was said also that ball cartridges, which they were never allowed to have without permission, had been found on them.

Be this all true or not, it is a thing which might quite conceivably happen, and yet we leave one man isolated in this manner, weeks away from any aid or succour, however much he may require it.

The following day, soon after starting, we passed Kiro, the first Soudan station on the Belgian side. The river about this part is very uninteresting, running through flat country, with low scrub, giant grass, and other vegetation. The stream is very rapid, about 4 miles an hour, and every now and then, before we knew where we were, we were embedded in the bank. The passengers who had come up the river said it was very tedious fighting against the current: it took them seven hours to get from Mongalla to Gondokoro, which in the reverse direction only took a little over three.

Besides the three passengers already mentioned, there was another who had just gone up to

Gondokoro from a new Mission station, which we approached towards the evening of the second day. Several C.M.S. men had arrived quite recently from England to open up a fresh field of work on the Upper Nile. Their first intention was to settle near Mongalla, but that idea was abandoned on the advice of one or two "older hands," one of whom had come from as far as Mengo to advise them as to the site. They had fixed themselves, for the time being, near the river bank, a few miles south of Bor, and had worked hard in clearing ground to form their location. As it was dark when we reached there, and the boat only stayed a very short time, I could see nothing of the place. We left the missionary behind, and in his stead took on Archdeacon Gwynn, who had been up to give them the benefit of his long experience, and was now returning to his work at Khartoum. He told me that they would never be able to remain where they were, so near the river, as it would be very unhealthy in the wet season. He had advised them to go later, about 10 miles inland, on to the hills, and there he thought they would find good water and be freer from mosquitoes.

They were a picked set of men, keenly enthusiastic about their work, and if success is possible, I am sure it will be theirs.

Bor is supposed to be terribly overrun by mosquitoes, so before we got there I retreated to bed, and got safely under my mosquito net.

Early the next morning we came in sight of a herd of seventeen elephants, drinking at the water's edge. The boat disturbed them, and they fled in mad terror, tossing up their trunks, flapping their monstrous ears, and trumpeting loudly. We followed their panic-stricken flight with glasses until they finally disappeared into the thicket.

The black rhinoceros is plentiful near Gondokoro, and all along the river crocodiles were to be seen in great numbers. Hippo were constantly floundering about, thrusting their enormous ugly heads, with red ears, out of the water.

When out of sight of these tropical monsters I could imagine myself on the Norfolk Broads. Here, as there, boats in the distance appeared to be travelling overland. The river winds to such a degree that one day, when looking well over to the right, not in the least in the direction in which we appeared to be going, we saw a steamer apparently embedded in the papyrus; but not very long after we met and glided past her. With such a swift current and sharp curves, steering is extremely difficult, and our boat seemed to be enjoying a rather bad waltz. She would make a good start forward, then slacken speed, and dash against a corner; next she would back, make a complete turn, start off again, and run into another corner on the other side; round again, and so on.

Fortunately the growth at the sides had not much foundation, and we simply drifted into the

midst of it, and the barges were enveloped in the high grass. The great size of the papyrus was forcibly brought home to me when one or two of the stems were gathered, and I found them 18 to 20 feet long, and the diameter of the mop head over 4 feet. Mile after mile of this growth of a bright apple-green colour is restful to the eye, but after a few days it becomes rather monotonous.

When there was not much to entertain me further afield, I gave my attention to the native life on the barges. The upper deck of one, was occupied by the beds of the Turkish officers who were travelling down, and I came to the conclusion that they had quite the best of it, with European beds, mosquito curtains, all in the open.

On the lower deck at one end was a fireplace for general use, in the form of a raised block of cement, in which were several hollows for different fires, and at these there were always a few women engaged in cooking.

A favourite food, which they made night and morning, was a sort of batter, which they spread on a hot greased sheet of iron placed over the fire. They would make dozens of these cakes in rapid succession, and when they were cooked, pile them one upon the other. They are really the unleavened bread of the Bible.

Next to a woman who was baking cakes, was another who was cooking "dourro" in a pot and stirring it with a stick; and beside her, making

the Archdeacon's porridge, was a boy who had served the Kalifa, and had been found, wounded in the mouth, lying by his dead master's body.

We arrived at Lake Kambah too late to see anything of it, and the following day we entered the channel cut through the sudd. "Sudd" is the name given to masses of water-plants and papyrus which have floated into the river from neighbouring lakes and been allowed to remain stationary long enough for the limbs to reach the bottom and take root, or jam together in a solid conglomeration, putting an end to navigation.

Some twenty years ago an Italian official, Gessi by name, found his passage up the river blocked, and turning to go back, found retreat also impossible, as the channel in the meantime had become choked up behind him. He endured great hardships, and came very near to death before he succeeded in extricating himself. A passage has since been made with infinite difficulty and labour, and was opened in 1900. The stream, they hope, is rapid enough to keep it clear; at any rate, it has done so up till now. This channel is 20 miles long, and took two years to complete.

The evening light on the Nile was very fascinating. As we sat in the fore part of the boat, looking ahead along the artificial channel we were following, its uniform width, with the growth of the sides conveying the idea of a well-cut hedge, we felt as if we were gliding down a beautiful country lane

in a state of flood. It was a very pleasant change after the "bumping" experiences of the last few days.

There is very little animal life on that part of the river. Occasionally we would see a fish jump out of the water, or a few birds fly past. My fellow-passengers complained of it being deadly dull on the way up, as they made such slow progress, and reminded me that I ought to be very thankful I was coming down-stream, and not struggling upwards. It certainly was more agreeable to be able to cover in ten days a distance which they had taken nineteen to accomplish.

After sunset we were able to sit on the upper uncovered deck, whence we got a broader view of our surroundings, and one evening while sitting there, we were afforded another proof of the tortuous course of the river. There was a large grass fire some miles away, and at one moment it was to be seen in the distance to our right; then suddenly we found it flaring away to our left, and presently seemed to be leaving it behind, but after a while we would look up again and see it straight ahead. We must have faced all points of the compass within an hour.

When the mosquitoes were not too troublesome, these evening hours on the upper deck were delightful. A full moon made it almost as light as day, and the stars were magnificent.

Early on the fourth day from Gondokoro we passed east of Lake No, and leaving the Bahr-el-

Gabel, entered the White Nile. We were then free of the Sudd, and the river assumed a different aspect. It is more direct in its course, and the banks on either side are lower.

We kept a keen look-out for any animals which might come within the field of vision, and were rewarded several times by seeing herds of buffalo, but alas no lions or giraffes. The atmosphere had also become less oppressive, and being free from the stagnant marshes, the breeze that met us was very fresh and welcome.

That night we reached Taufikia, and lay alongside until the morning. Before starting onwards, I had a chance of going ashore, and found it a rather pretty little place, situated on a fairly high bank. It is the spot which was chosen by Sir Samuel Baker for his camp when he was clearing the Bahr-el-Zaref of sudd. Now it is the headquarters of the troops of the Upper Nile, and three or four white officers are usually stationed there. Their quarters, and a great many of the huts, are built of red bricks. There are some fine trees all round, and the settlers have been successful in their attempt to form gardens.

While wandering round the native part, I witnessed a pretty little domestic scene. A large family were having their morning meal outside their hut, and as they ate their dhurra, an old woman, whom I concluded was "grandma," rose from the ground. In her hand she carried a gourd containing some grease resembling bad butter, and







FASHODA OR KODOK



SHILLUKS

with this delightful concoction she anointed the head of each member of the family, rubbing it in as she poured it on.

I also came across a youth who was freshly begrimed with ashes in a most fantastic manner; this is a native custom, their primary reason being to mitigate the bite of the mosquito. The boy I saw, had made his face almost white with the powder, and presented quite a diabolical appearance.

It was a run of about six hours from Taufikia to Fashoda, or Kodok as it is now called. I had time before the sun set, to walk out to the entrenchments thrown up by Marchand, and to see the garden which he laid out, which is still kept in a flourishing condition.

There are two native villages a little removed from the river, where the huts vary in form from those higher up the Nile. They look like rows of large mushrooms, and are constructed with a low mud wall and overhanging thatched roof, which almost meets the ground. The Shilluks, who inhabit this part, are very tall and slender, light in colour, with an intelligent cast of countenance and pleasant expression. Their weapon is a long lance and sometimes they also carry a big knife. They affect all kinds of beads, and ivory armlets. Round their loins they wear a circlet made from the shell of ostrich eggs. They cut the shell into small squares, bore a hole in each, and thread them on the hair of a giraffe's tail. Then they roll the strand of tiny squares backwards and forwards over a stone until

they become perfectly smooth and round. Unless it had been explained, one could never have guessed what they were, or how they were made.

The crowning distinction of these people is their coiffure. At first sight, I thought they were wearing tam-o'-shanters or felt hats, but on nearer observation I found it was all hair actually growing on the head. One man had the front part of his pate shaved, except for a cock's-comb down the middle, in the position that in other lands might be occupied by a middle parting. Over the head, from ear to ear, stood up a mass of what looked like felt, in the form of a hat brim. Rome was not built in a day, and neither were these men's head-dresses. It had taken years for the hair to grow and amalgamate with the unravelled bark or fibre which they work into it, forming a compact mass capable of being shaped to any design.

We were at Kodok during the Feast of Bairam, and as there was much drinking and dancing going on in the evening, we went to see what we could of the fun.

We joined a group round some women who were dancing; one of the number, who wore a cloth draped round her up to the armpits, came forward and wriggled about a little, then threw her head back as far as possible, thrust out her chest, and swayed as she walked, with something of the movement of a camel, or, as I have seen it elsewhere described, "like an amorous pigeon." She approached the onlookers, putting her head as near

as she could to their faces. They were expected to press a coin against her forehead, which, owing to the grease thereon and the position of the head, remained sticking until she had accumulated quite a number, when they would be quickly collected by one of her friends as she passed them. As the donor pressed the coin to her forehead, he would flick his fingers together over her face as a sign of approval, when the whole company would join her in the shrill "sachareet," which is a high-pitched trill, expressive of joy. It is also used among several tribes as a salutation.

We were much delayed the next morning, waiting for the chief witness against the prisoners we were taking to Khartoum. He had gone off the boat overnight, and could not be found anywhere.

When the captain's patience was quite exhausted, and we were about to start, we could see from afar the soldiers who had gone in search, rushing him along as fast as they could. He was put on the boat in a dazed and drunken condition: the Feast of Bairam had evidently been too much for him.

After this delay, we got on our way again as quickly as possible. The temperature had now become quite agreeable, and this, added to the almost entire absence of mosquitoes made life very pleasant. Everything, too, looked much greener and more healthy.

We put in before daylight at Goz Abu Guma, where we had to take on some cargo, but the men could not be got to work without great pressure.

The Bairam festivities seem to disorganise everything. When we were at last ready to start we found, to our dismay, that one of our barges had stuck, so we were detained there for some hours longer, trying to get it off.

The next morning we were at Dueim, a large business place with good shops kept chiefly by Arabs. I now felt that the Upper Nile trip was fast coming to an end, and the following morning we came to a spot, where blue water was visibly intermingling with white, and rounding a curve, we ran alongside and fastened up to a small quay opposite the Khartoum Hotel.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### KHARTOUM

The Palace—The Gordon College—Omdurman—The Bazaars—  
Khartoum Hotel

**K**HARTOUM, the capital of the Soudan, lies on the Blue Nile so little beyond the junction of the two rivers that it almost faces Omdurman on the White Nile.

Stepping from the boat on to the miniature landing-stage, I mounted a small sandy incline, and crossing the road, found myself at once at the entrance to the hotel. I was agreeably surprised at its situation, having pictured it on some arid, shadeless spot; but on the contrary, I found it had a delightful view of the river, seen across a lovely avenue of trees. The Esplanade, in front, continues some distance beyond the Palace, which is almost a mile from the hotel, and forms a pleasant promenade in the early morning or cool of the evening. Along one side, facing the river, are the residences of the *élite* of Khartoum. Architecturally these houses are not beautiful, but are

substantially built, and mostly two-storied, with a flat roof, which is quite a necessity as a sleeping apartment during the hottest months of the year.

Standing out in bold relief against the blue sky is the White Palace, with its portico stretching right across the public road, and under which all the traffic passes. It is built on the site of General Gordon's old residence, which was a mere villa in comparison with the present stately Palace. In the entrance hall, high up in the wall, is a brass tablet to his memory, marking the height of the flight of steps where the great soldier fell.

The Palace is built round three sides of a square. The garden, at the back, is a dream of beauty, and is a marvellous example of the triumph of man over nature. Outside—sand, sand, sand, as far as the eye can reach ; but inside the gates a perfect little paradise.

The English Church Services are conducted in a large room in the Palace, and on Sunday morning, from my seat near a window, I could look into the garden below and admire the beautiful green growth, which is as near as they can get to turf in tropical countries ; the brightly coloured flower-beds, with their wealth of blooms ; the trailing bougainvillea clinging to the opposite corner of the verandah ; and the stately palm trees raising their heads in protest against my thinking I was in England.

Now and again smart officers in uniform, accompanied by ladies in the latest creations from London or Paris, would cross the garden on their way to





THE PALACE. KHARTOUM



church, and I could not help picturing to myself another scene, enacted on the self-same spot not so many years ago, and wondering what the hero of it would have thought could he have revisited the spot for one brief moment.

The Gordon statue stands at the back of the Palace facing the desert. A lady missionary, a good Arabic scholar, told me that she had often heard the natives, as they stood beneath it, talking to the great soldier, and asking him why he did not come down and speak with them. Then they would turn to her, and ask her, was he really like that? was his face that colour?

Returning to the front of the Palace, and going a little beyond, the British barracks are to be seen, as well as the hospital. Still further is the fine red-brick building of the Gordon College, which I visited. The architecture of the Arcade at the back is very fine; the class-rooms and dining-rooms are equal to any European college, and there is an excellent library and the nucleus of a museum.

The education is purely secular, and there were as students at the time I was there, 104 Sheiks, 23 of whom were Boarders; 210 Egyptians, and the rest were Arabs, and other coloured youths of various races.

Other buildings of importance in the town are the Government Offices, the Post Office, several Banks, and a magnificent Mosque was nearing completion. I went up to the roof and from there got a splendid idea of the general plan of the city. The streets are

broad, and at right angles to each other, but shadeless and arid to a degree. No doubt this will be rectified when the population grows to the dimensions of the plan of the city, and squares and avenues, now only on paper, become what their name implies.

There is a market, and some very good stores; also a Zoological Garden, and a Tennis Club. January and February are the coolest months of the year, and it was certainly quite pleasant in February when I was there. I did not care to exert myself much between the hours of eleven and four, although, had it been necessary, I could have done so without being unduly distressed. Probably the worst climatic troubles that have to be contended with at Khartoum, are the fearful winds and sand-storms. One day there was what I should call a decidedly high wind, and sand penetrated every hole and crevice, but I was told the storm I saw must be multiplied by at least ten, to get an approximate idea of what a really bad one is like.

I spent a morning at Omdurman, the old capital of the Mahdi and Kalifa. It is a city of wrecked mud dwellings, straggling nearly 5 miles along the banks of the White Nile. Since our occupation of the Soudan, many of the former inhabitants have returned, and by degrees the town is assuming its normal condition. The streets are clean, but I sank ankle-deep in sand, and though incongruous, the steam tram was a very practical means of covering the mile or two which separated me from the Bazaars.

The Bazaars are very enticing, and far more original than those at Assuan or Cairo. In the Mahdi's house curios and mementoes of Gordon are exhibited, such as his carriage, piano, and so forth.

The Kalifa's house is still intact, and not far from it are the ruins of the Mahdi's tomb, still showing the marks of the shells that laid it low, and with it the last vestige of power of a fanatical despot.

It had been an interesting morning, and I felt well repaid for the visit.

The impression left after a stay at the Khartoum Hotel varies according to the direction from which it is approached. The visitors arriving from the north were dissatisfied and full of complaints: "There ought to be more bath-rooms;" "Fancy, I have no lock to my door;" "Did you ever see such a suite of furniture!" "The idea of one lamp like that to light the whole verandah." These are typical of the remarks I overheard. But coming from the south, after months of privation and spare living, it seemed to me that the hotel was replete with every comfort imaginable. Possibly a medium between the two opposite views, would be the correct version.

During the season it is thronged with fashionable people who either come to visit friends stationed in the capital, or who are enterprising enough to wish to see a little beyond Assuan. Saturday evening is "guest-night," and many gay parties gather round

the prettily decorated tables. Dinner is served to the accompaniment of an excellent band, and the smart toilettes of the ladies, mingled with the varied uniforms of the officers, make a scene equal to any on a similar occasion in Europe. Later in the evening there is a dance.

The officers of the Egyptian Army, with their tarbooshes, were perhaps the most imposing figures among the men, and it was strange to see them, and ladies clad in white satin gowns and shoes arriving for the ball on donkeys. As I sat and watched them, such a mixture of Park Lane and Hampstead Heath was very confusing.

As I have said before, it is only my experiences in the more unknown parts of Africa that I wish to give in full detail, therefore I have rather skipped over the thousand miles or more which lie between Gondokoro and Khartoum. And as Khartoum has now been brought by the railway within the reach of the ordinary tourist, there is no need to describe my experiences between it and Cairo. I will only say that there is a very luxurious train which carries the traveller across the desert to Wady Halfa, whence either a Government or tourist boat will convey him all the way by water to Cairo, or he can, if he pleases, rejoin the rail at Assuan, and reach his destination in less than half the time.

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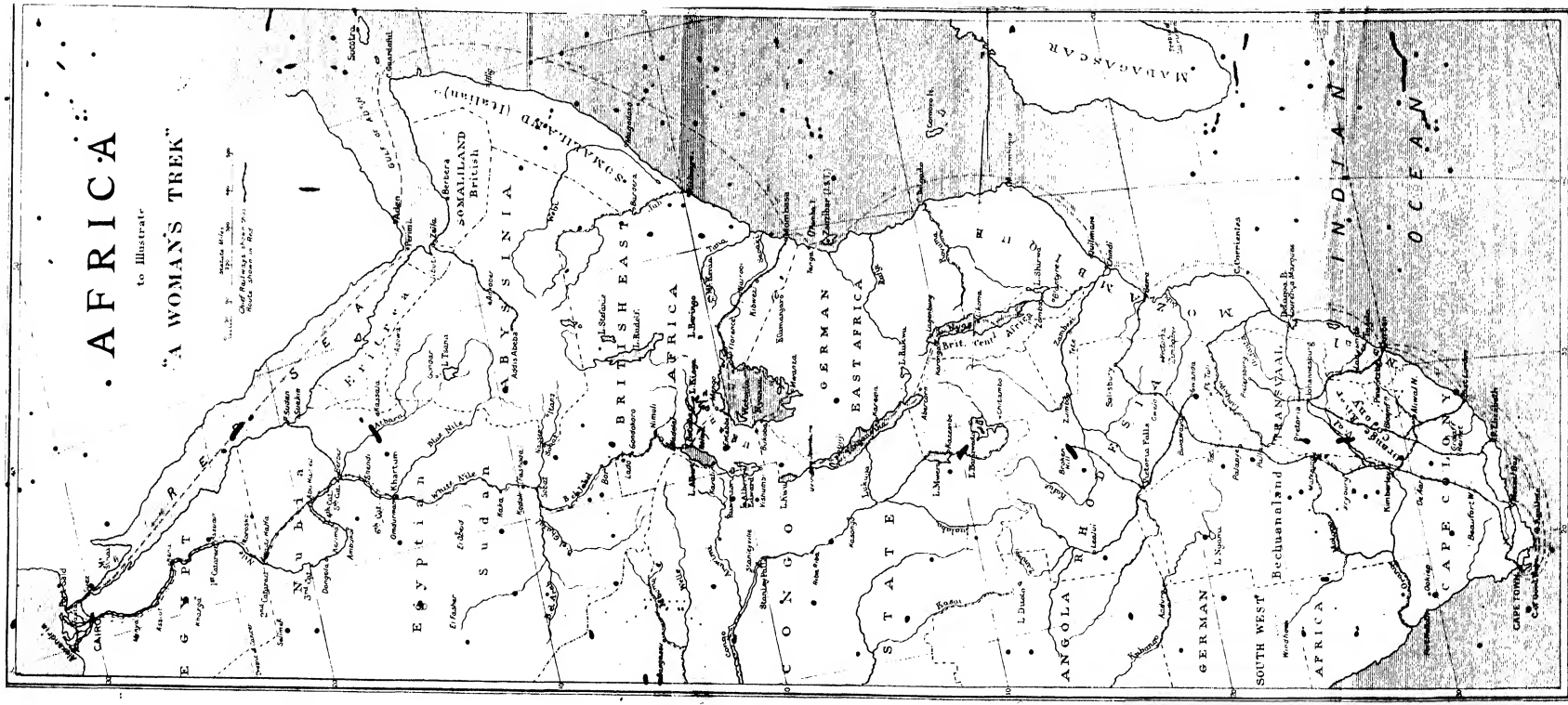
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